

BIRD'S STORY

6

Kaoru Mori



BER- E- S- STORY



Kaoru
Mori

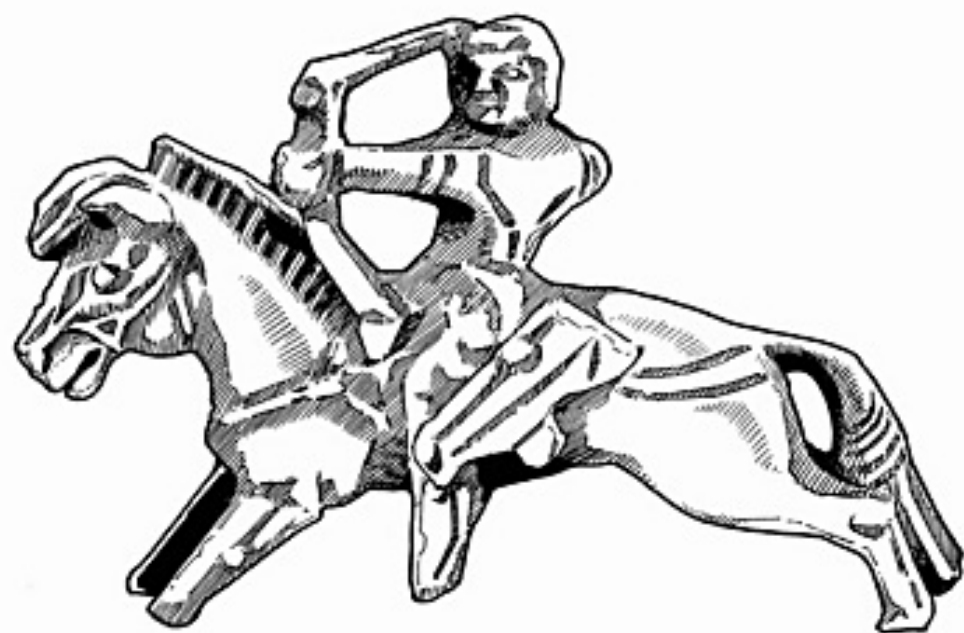




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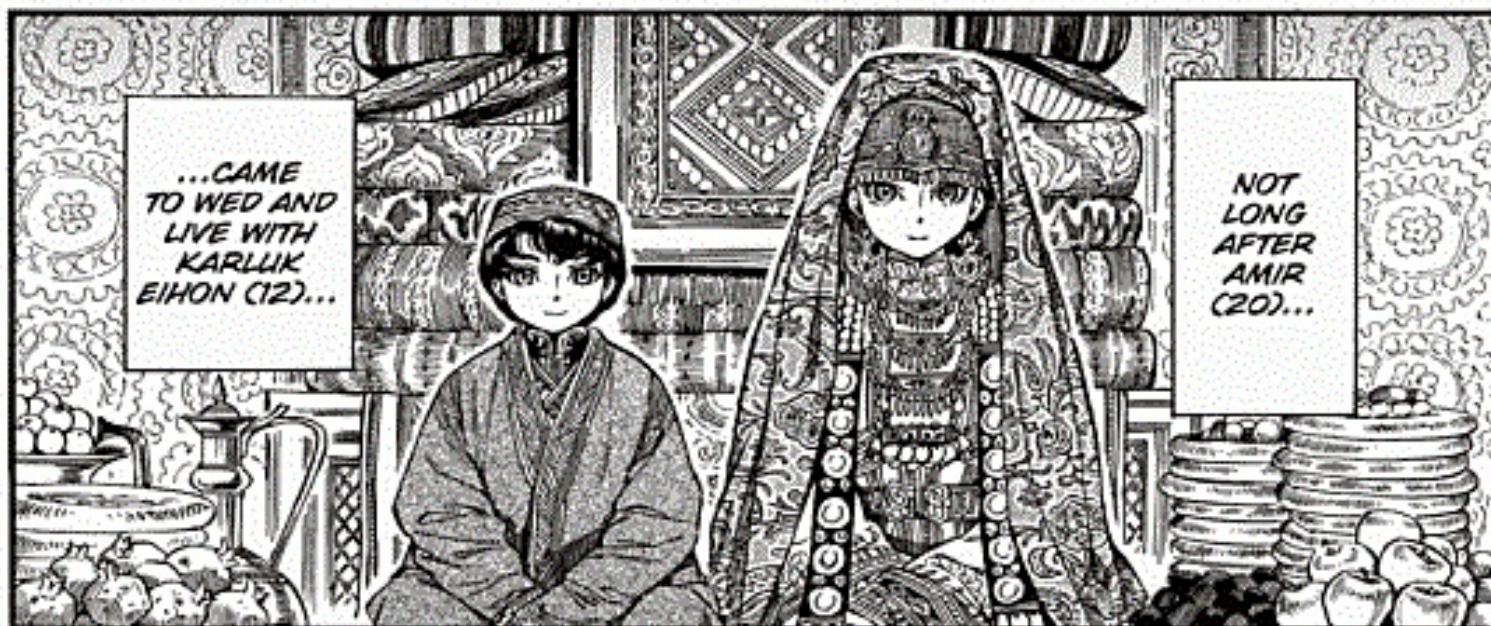


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CENTRAL
ASIA IN THE
NINETEENTH
CENTURY.

◆ CHAPTER 28 ◆



...CAME
TO WED AND
LIVE WITH
KARLUK
EIHON (12)...

NOT
LONG
AFTER
AMIR
(20)...



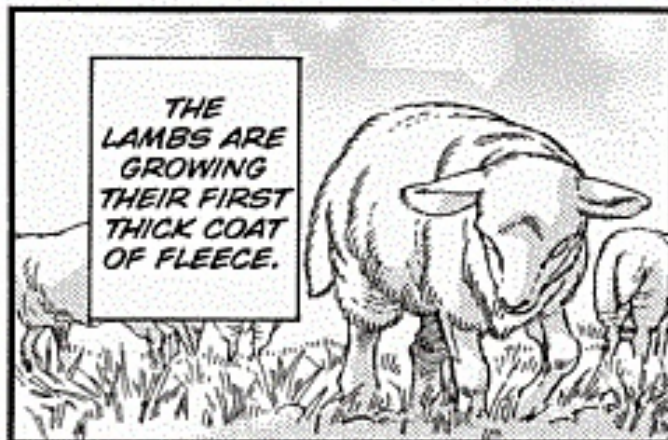
I'M
NEXT!

ME
TOO!
DO ME
TOO!!

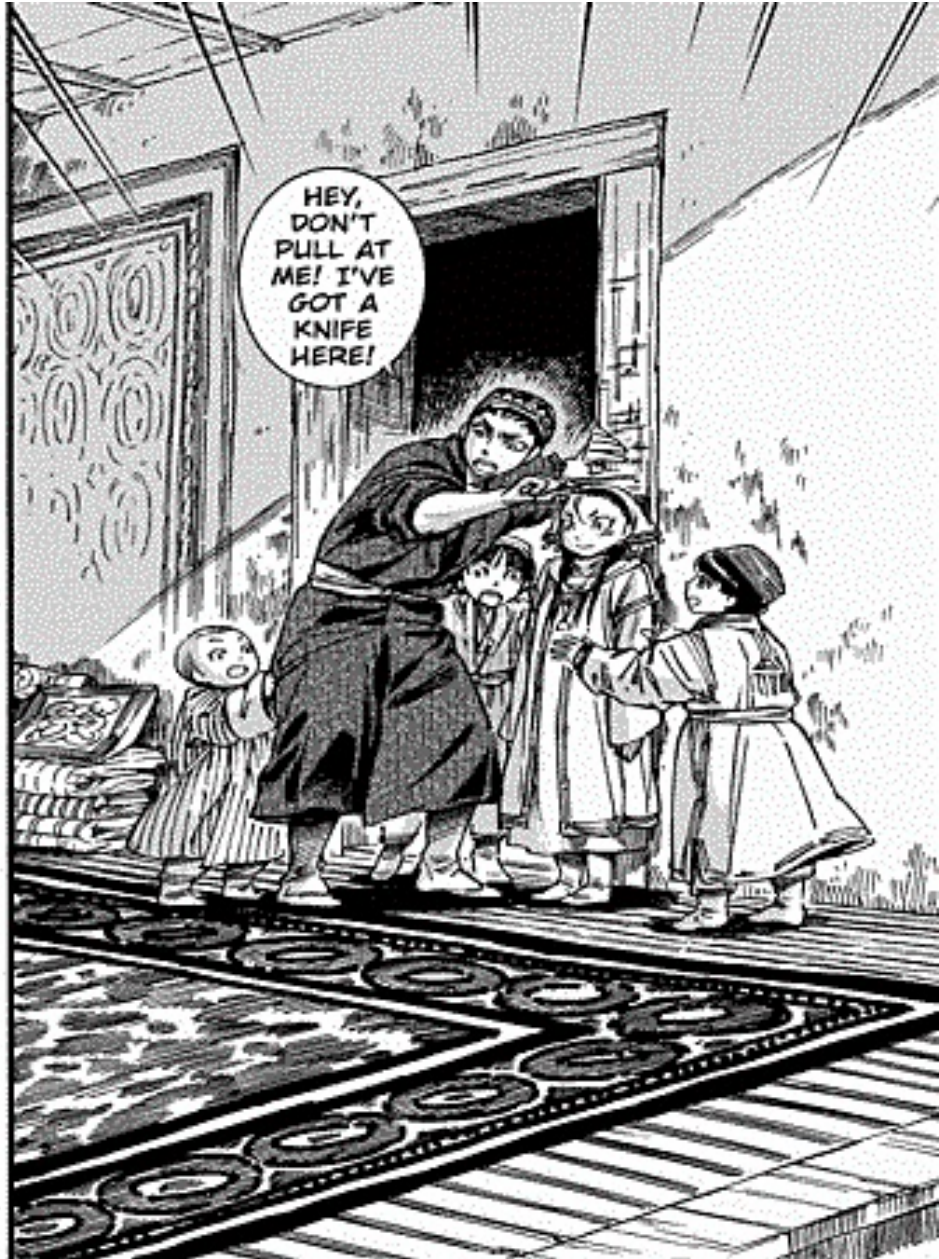
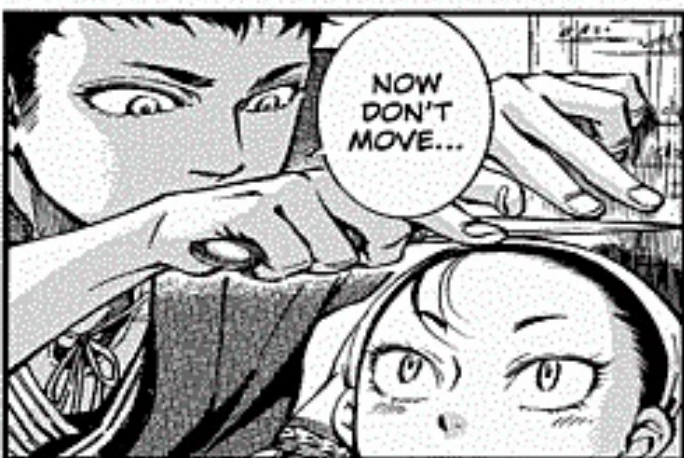
RIGHT
AROUND
THE TIME
WHEN BOTH
BRIDE AND
GROOM
ARE ABOUT
TO MARK
ANOTHER
YEAR
GONE BY—

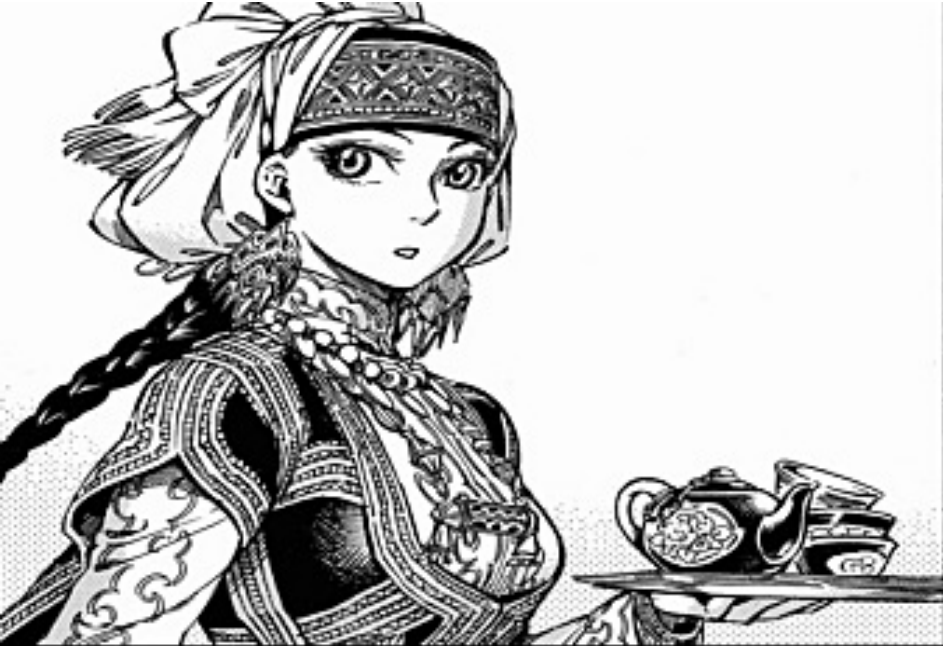


THE
FOALS HAVE
BECOME
YEARLINGS.



THE
LAMBS ARE
GROWING
THEIR FIRST
THICK COAT
OF FLEECE.





CHAPTER 28
COMPARING
HEIGHTS





THAT WAS A REALLY LONG TIME AGO.

YOU CERTAINLY HAVE GROWN.

NOT SO LONG AGO, YOU WERE HALF MY HEIGHT.



HE MAY OUTGROW HIS FATHER EVENTUALLY.

NO, IT'S TRUE. ALL HIS UNCLES WERE VERY TALL...

WE CAN'T BE SURE OF THAT.



YOU DON'T NOTICE WHEN YOU SEE HIM EVERY DAY.

THIS ONE!!

THIS ONE'S ME!



HOHH? THAT RIGHT?

HE'S GROWN THAT MUCH?



THE FRONT PULLS APART WHEN I LIFT MY ARMS.

YEAH.

ARE THEY?



AND IT'S GETTING A LITTLE SHORT.

LET'S MAKE YOU NEW CLOTHES!

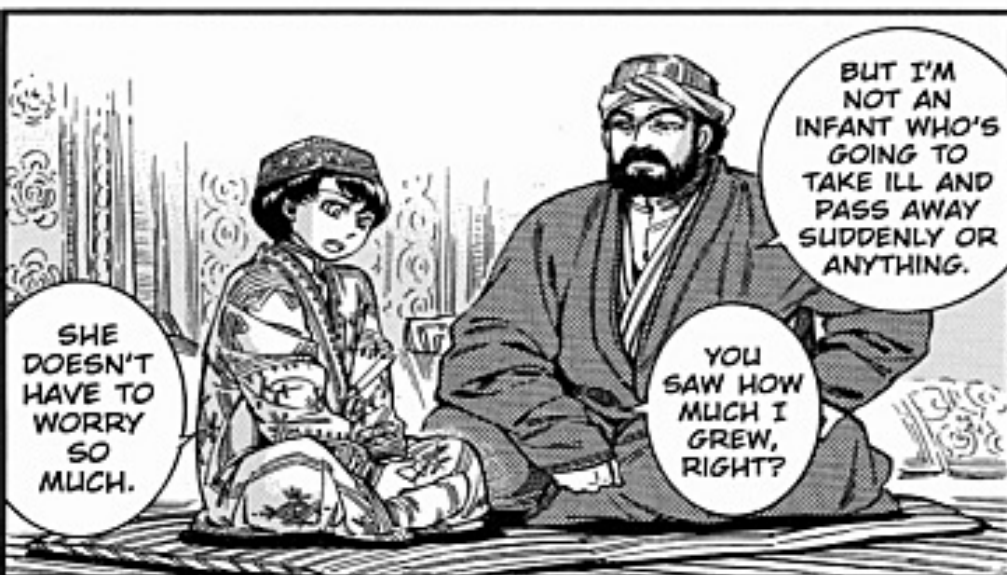


COME TO THINK OF IT, MY CLOTHES ARE FEELING A LITTLE TIGHT.





...I REALLY
THINK THERE
SHOULD BE
SOME EM-
BROIDERY...



SHE
DOESN'T
HAVE TO
WORRY
SO
MUCH.

BUT I'M
NOT AN
INFANT WHO'S
GOING TO
TAKE ILL AND
PASS AWAY
SUDDENLY OR
ANYTHING.

YOU
SAW HOW
MUCH I
GREW,
RIGHT?



THEN SHE
SAYS THAT
SHE'LL BE
WORRIED IF
SHE DOESN'T
EMBROIDER
SOMETHING
ON IT.



I THINK
IT'S ABOUT
TIME I WAS
TREATED
LIKE AN
ADULT.

IT'S
LIKE I'M
ALWAYS
BEING
MOTH-
ERED.





...ISN'T
IT BECAUSE
YOU CAN'T
BE RELIED
UPON AS A
HUSBAND?

KARLUK...



...BUT
THE REAL
CONCERN
HERE IS
AMIR'S
FEAR.

YOU
MAY
BE
RIGHT
...

...THAT
YOU'VE
OUT-
GROWN
THOSE
RISKS...



HMM?
WHAT'S
UP? WHAT
IS IT?



NOW,
DEAR...

YOU'RE
YOUNGER,
IT'S TRUE,
BUT YOU
HAVE TO
SHOW HER
YOUR MAN-
LINESS.

THAT WILL
EASE HER
WORRIES,
AND
SHE'LL LET
YOU BE.

BE A
MAN!



IT'S JUST...
IF HE WERE
TO BECOME
SICK AGAIN...



...THAT
HE IS
GOING TO
BE FINE,
THAT
NOTHING
WILL HAP-
PEN...

THERE
ARE
TIMES
WHEN
I FEEL
SURE...



...BUT I
WOULD STILL
WORRY IF WE
SUDDENLY
REMOVED
ALL OF THE
CHARMS.



...I'D
PREFER
HE WEAR
CLOTHES
WITH
EMBROIDERY
FOR JUST
A LITTLE
LONGER.



...BUT
IF EVEN
A LITTLE
EVIL CAN
BE DE-
TERRED...

I ALSO
KNOW THAT
THERE ARE
TIMES WHEN
NOTHING
YOU
DO WILL
HELP...



AMIR...

...REMEM-
BER WHEN
HE CAUGHT
HIS COLD?

YOU GOT
YOURSELF
TOO
WORKED
UP BACK
THEN.



I
UNDER-
STAND
YOUR
FEARS,
BUT...

.....I
DON'T
KNOW...



HE ISN'T
A CHILD
ANY-
MORE...

...SO BEING
TREATED
LIKE ONE IS
GRATING.

HE'S
A MAN
NOW.



I
UNDERSTAND
HOW KARLUK
FEELS ABOUT
THIS.



SO THE
MAN'S
FEELINGS
HAVE NO
BEARING?

YOU SAW
HER WHEN
KARLUK
HAD THAT
FEVER.

IF ANY-
THING
HAPPENED,
IT WOULD
HIT AMIR
THE
WORST.



WHY NOT
LET HER
DO WHAT
CALMS
HER?

STILL,
AMIR HAS
ANXIETIES
OVER
THIS.



UM...

MOTHER,
DO YOU
HAVE ANY
THOUGHTS
ON THE
MATTER?



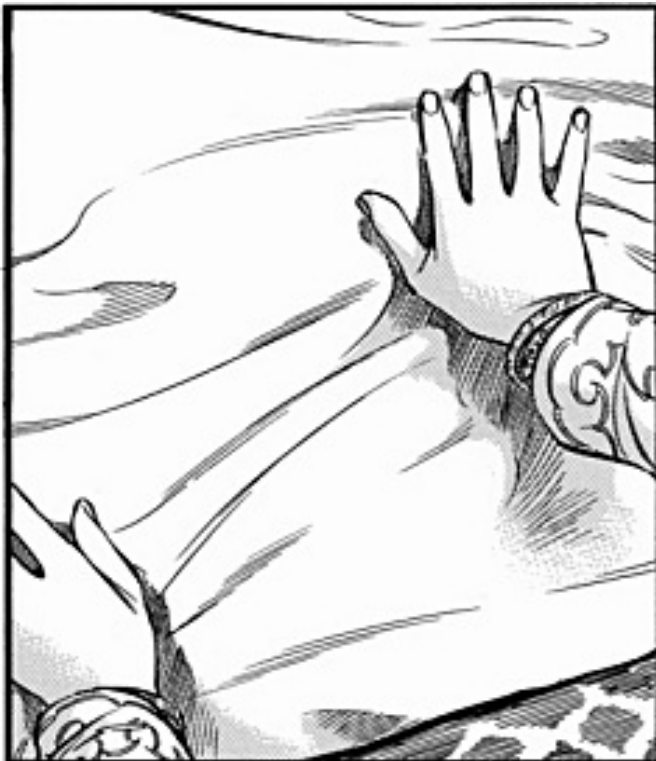
HEY, HEY.
WHY ARE
YOU TWO
GETTING ALL
WORKED
UP!?

SELEKE,
YOU'RE
JUST—

WHAT
DOES
THAT
MEAN
!?

WHAT'S
IT TO
HIM!? IT
MEANS
SHE
CARES
FOR HIM!





IT'S
SO
SAD.

I
DIDN'T
HEAR
THAT!

COME TO
THINK OF IT,
WARI'S LITTLE
BROTHER
DIED TOO.

SUCH A
SHAME. HE
WAS SO
YOUNG.

I'LL
HAVE TO
GO PAY
THEM A
VISIT.



IF
KARLUK
WERE TO
SUDDENLY
PASS
AWAY...

...I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
I'D DO.



YOU...

YES...

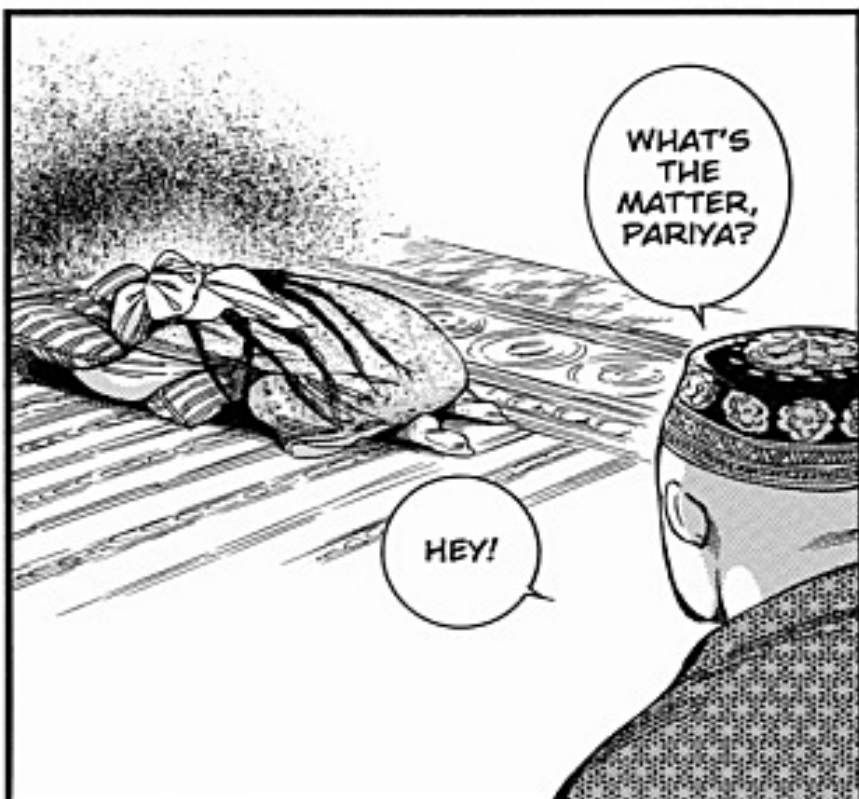
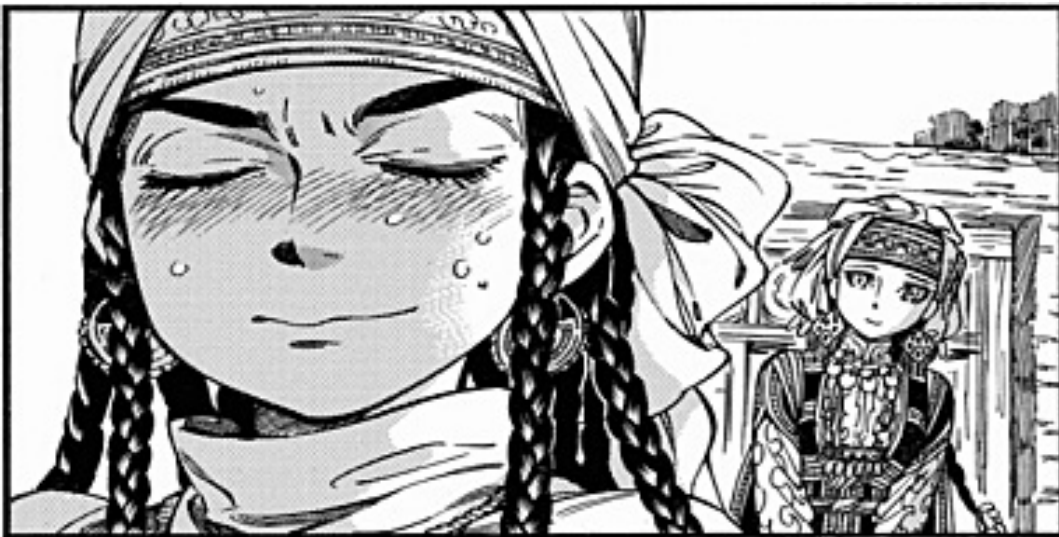
...YOU'RE
VERY
CLOSE,
AREN'T
YOU?



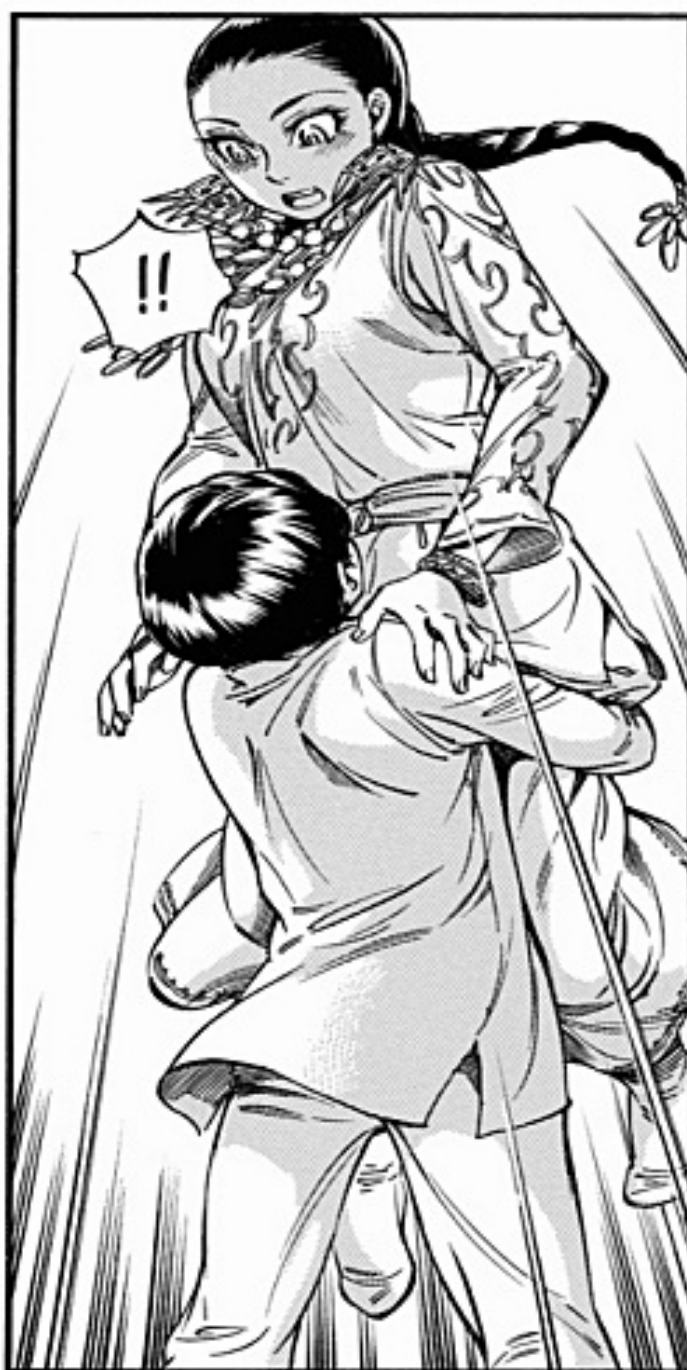
A
PERSON
CAN SEEM
COM-
PLETELY
HEALTHY
...

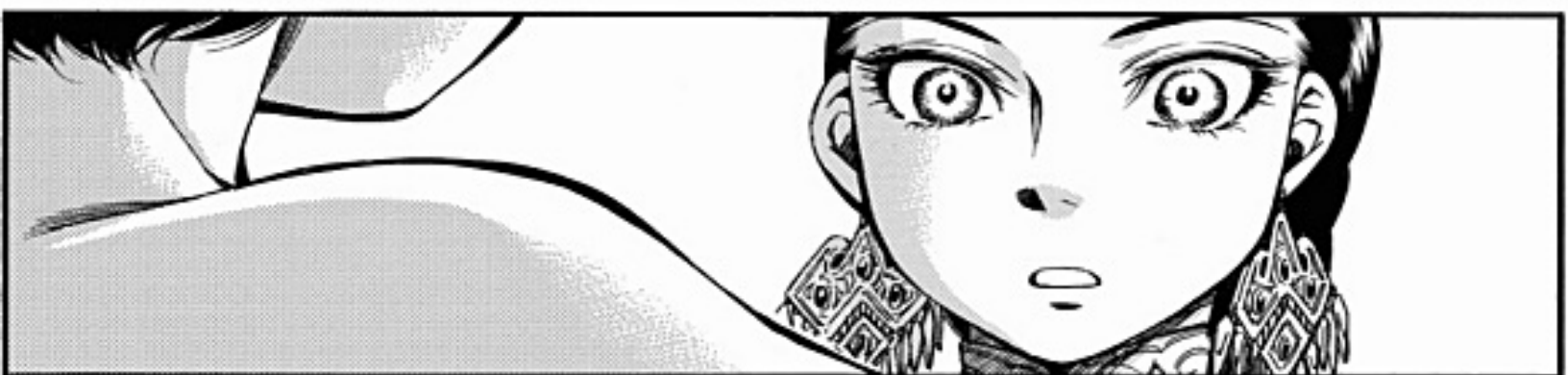
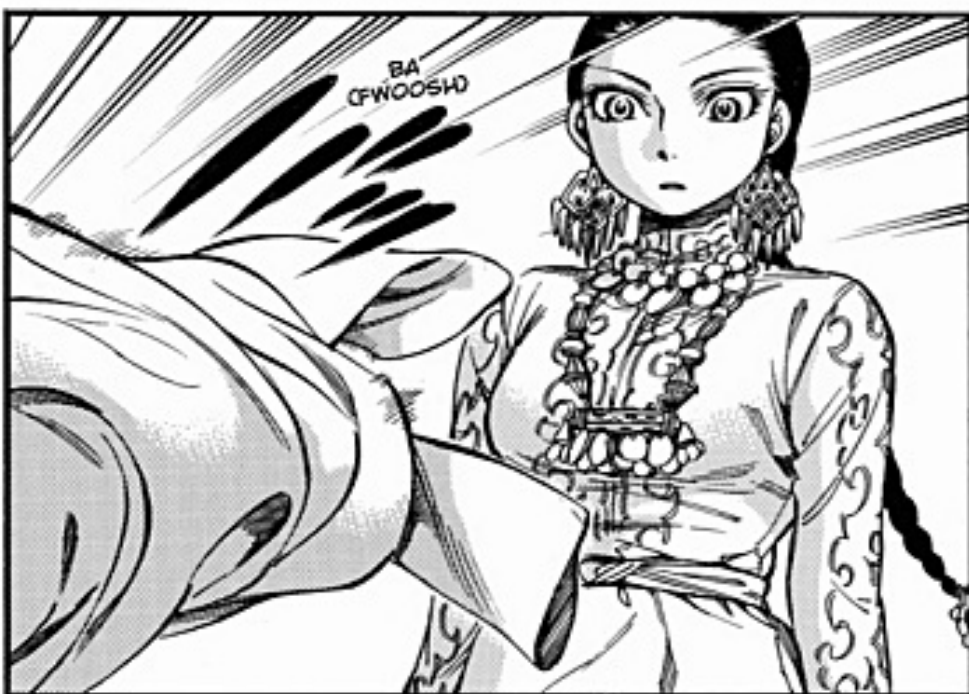
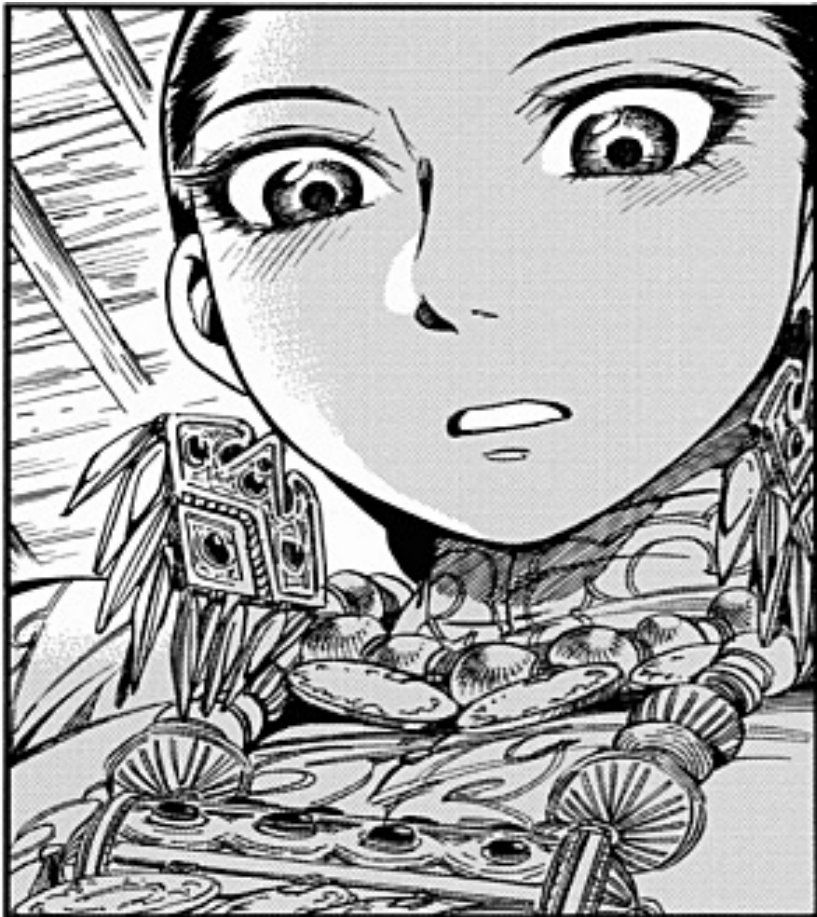
...BUT
ONE BAD
TURN, AND
HE COULD
BE GONE IN
THE BLINK
OF AN EYE!









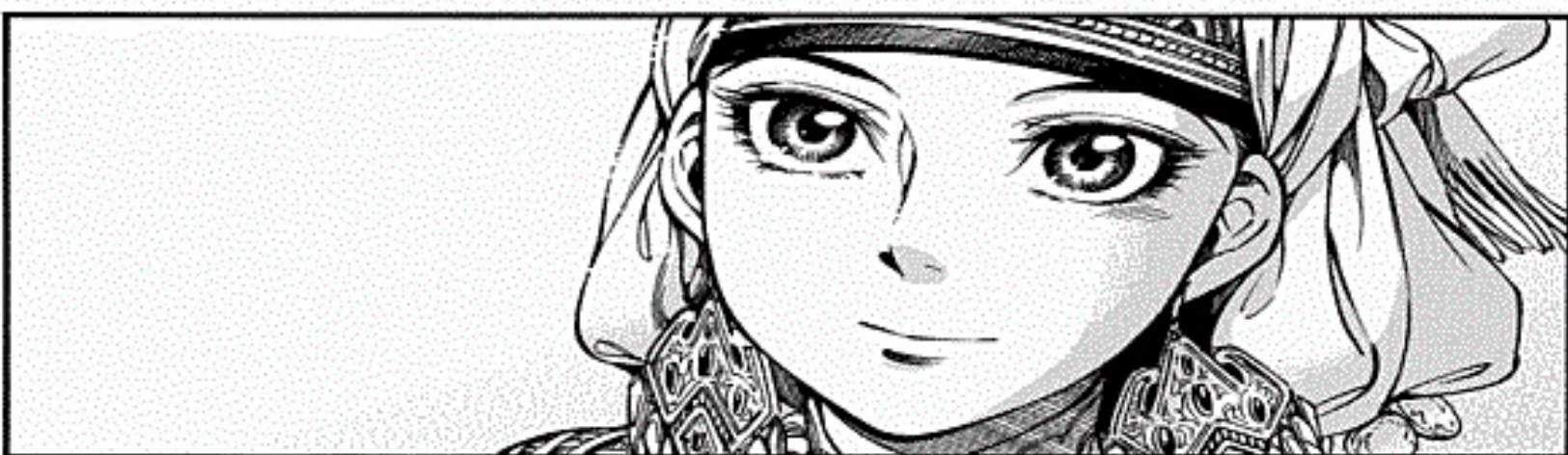


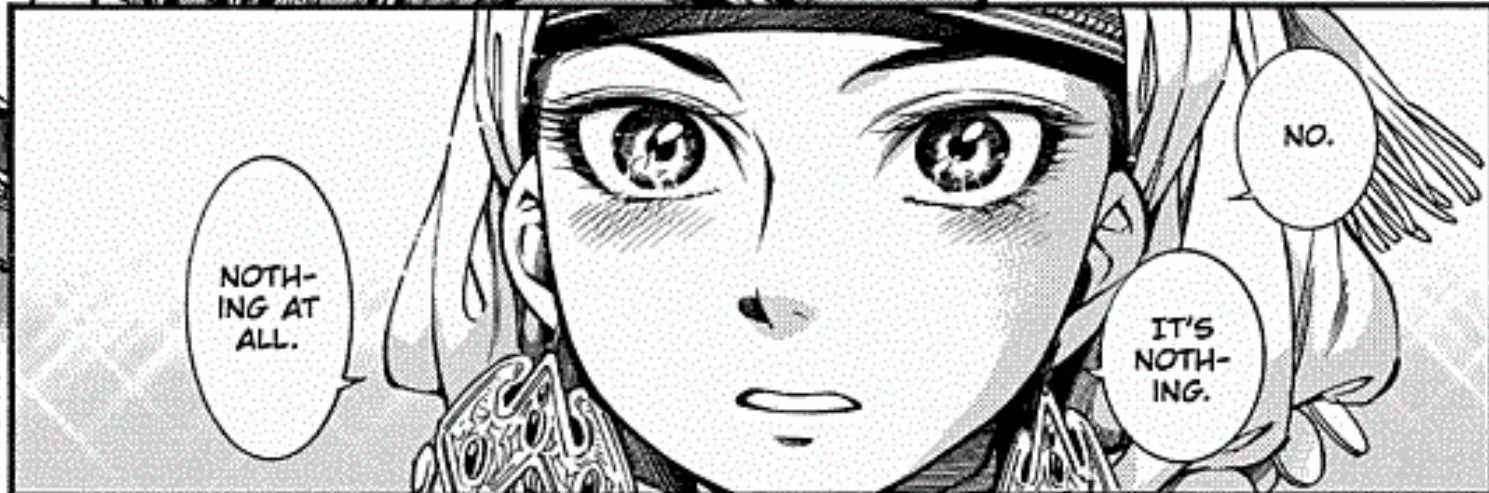












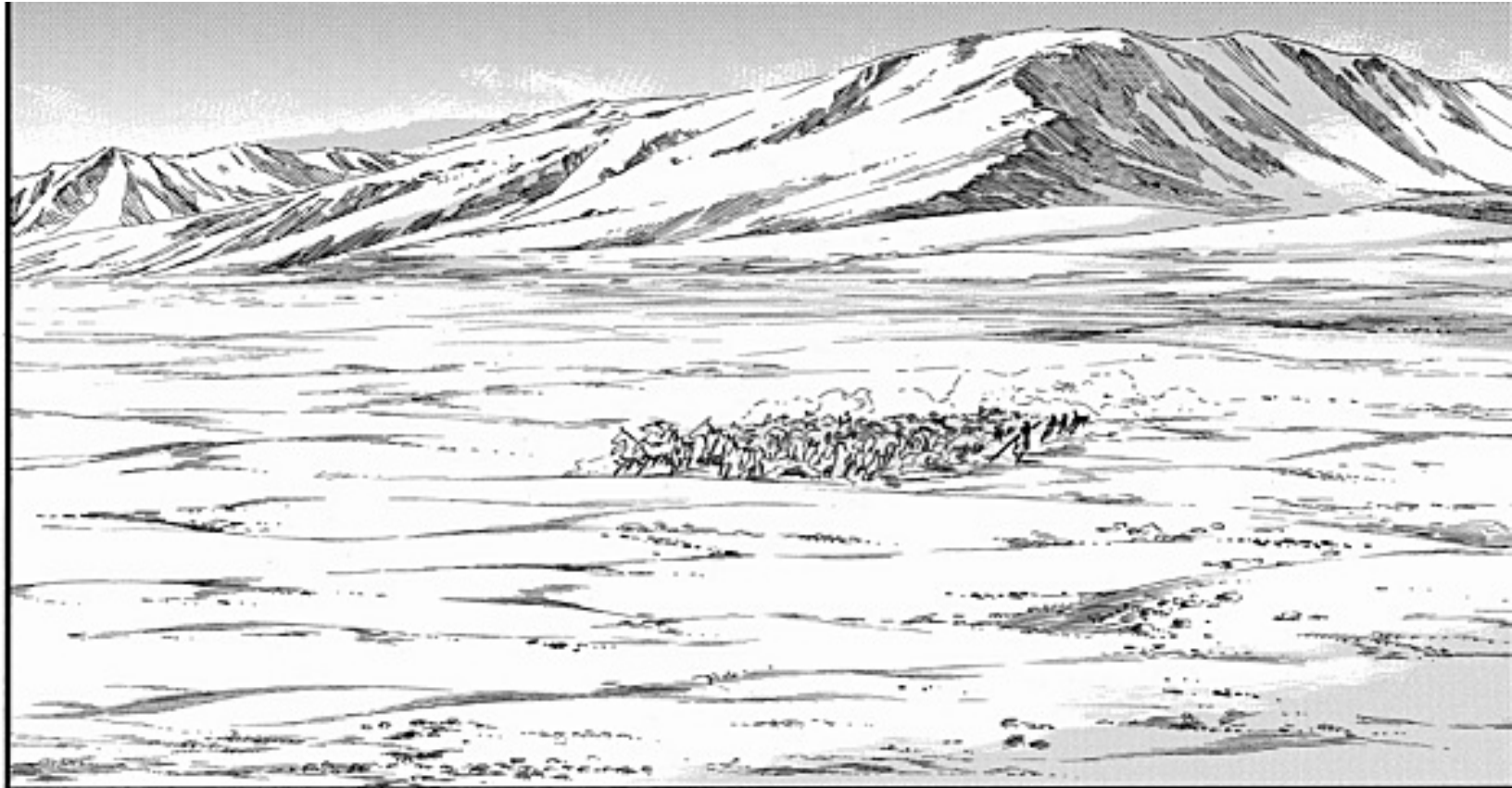


✦ CHAPTER 29 ✦

CHAPTER 29
GRAZING LAND

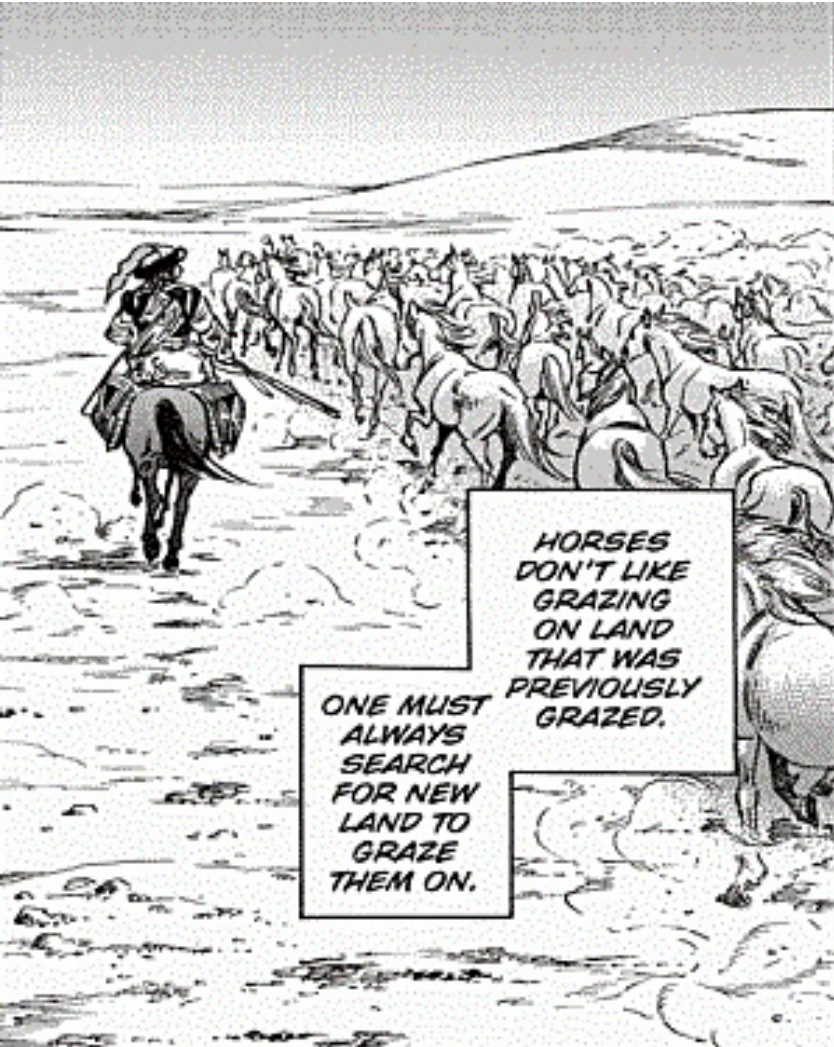






THE
HORSES
...





ONE MUST
ALWAYS
SEARCH
FOR NEW
LAND TO
GRAZE
THEM ON.

HORSES
DON'T LIKE
GRAZING
ON LAND
THAT WAS
PREVIOUSLY
GRAZED.



HORSES
ARE LIVE-
STOCK...

...BUT THEY
AREN'T
JUST ANY
LIVESTOCK.

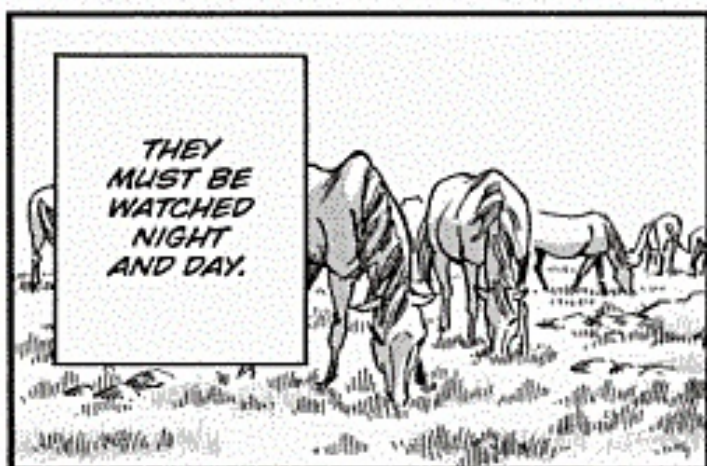


ONCE YOU
LEAVE WITH
THEM,
YOU'RE ON
THE ROAD
FOR MANY
DAYS.

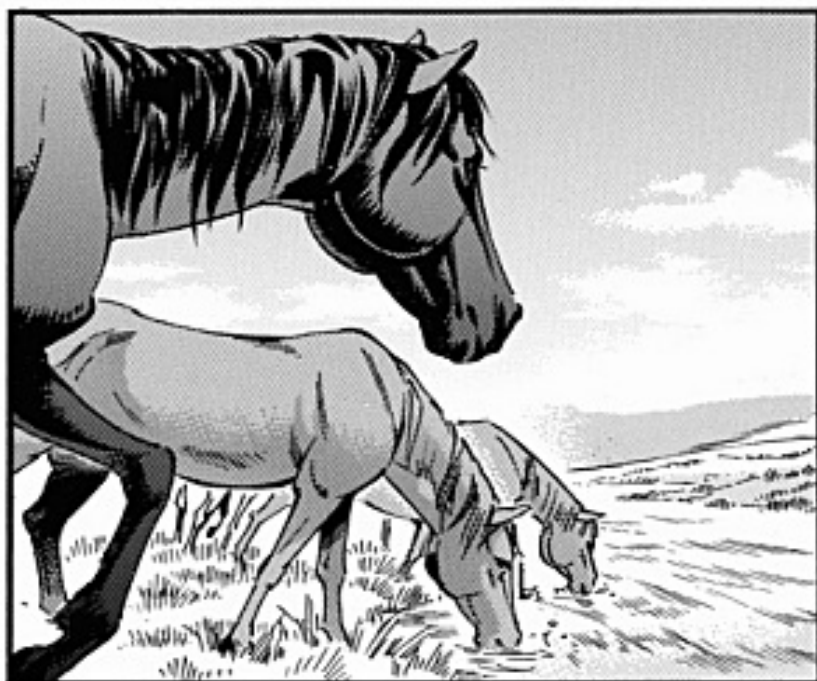
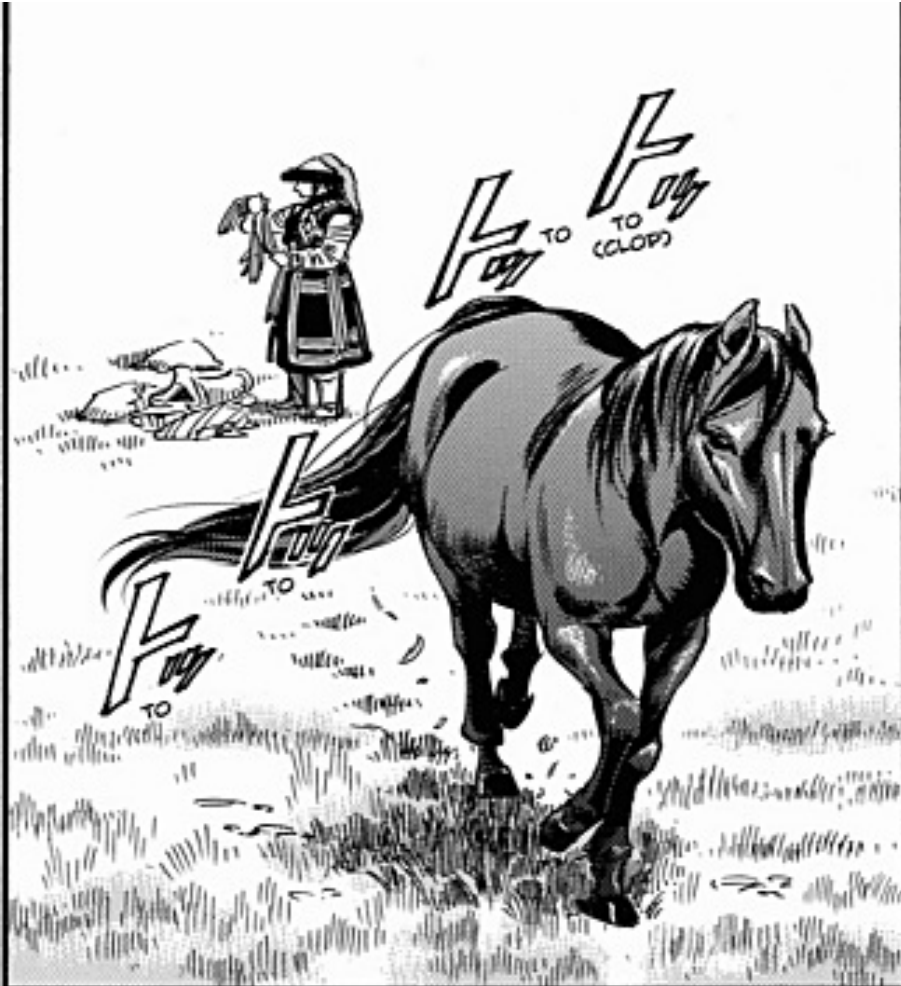
SO
FEEDING
THEM
TAKES
TIME.



THEY
AREN'T AS
EASY TO
RAISE AS
SHEEP OR
CAMELS.



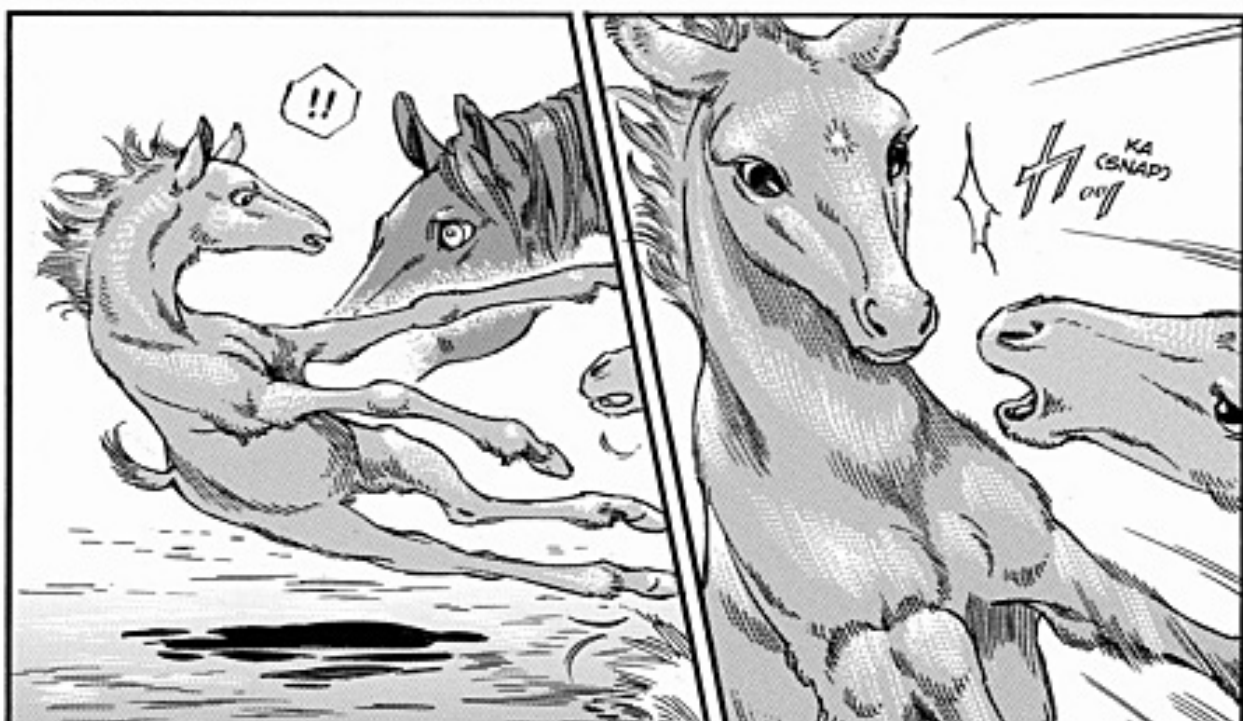
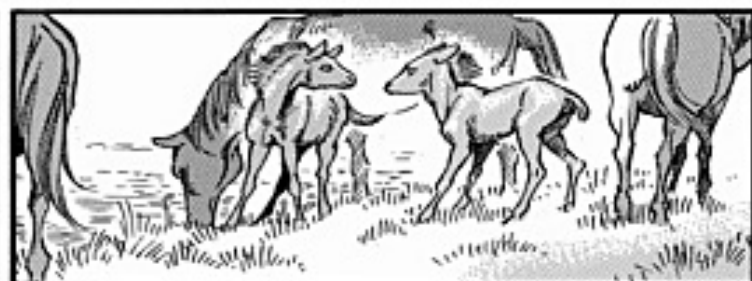
THEY
MUST BE
WATCHED
NIGHT
AND DAY.

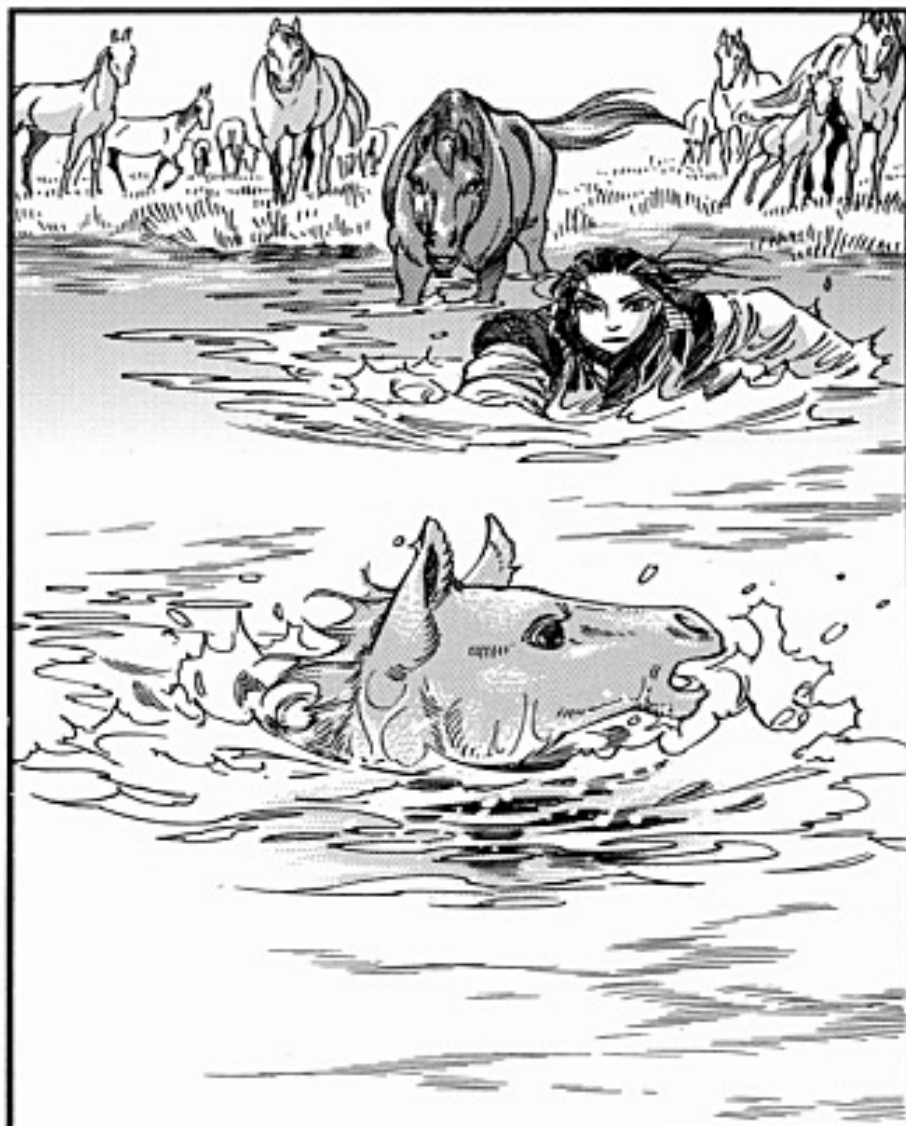


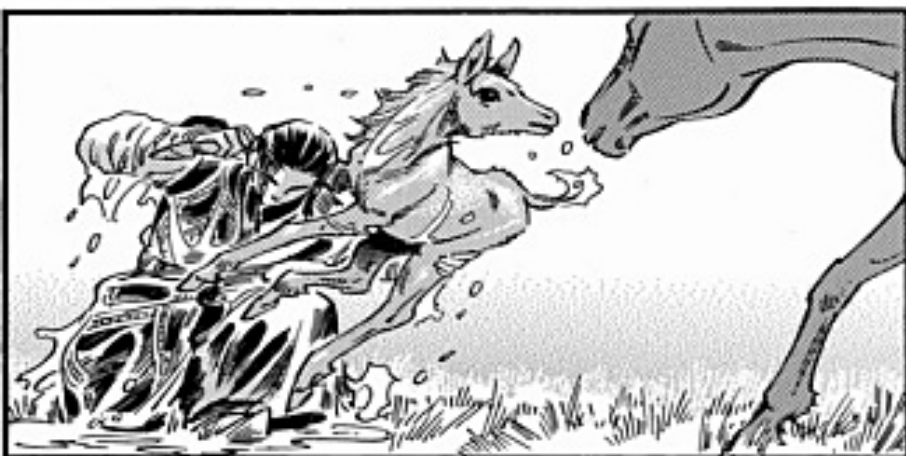
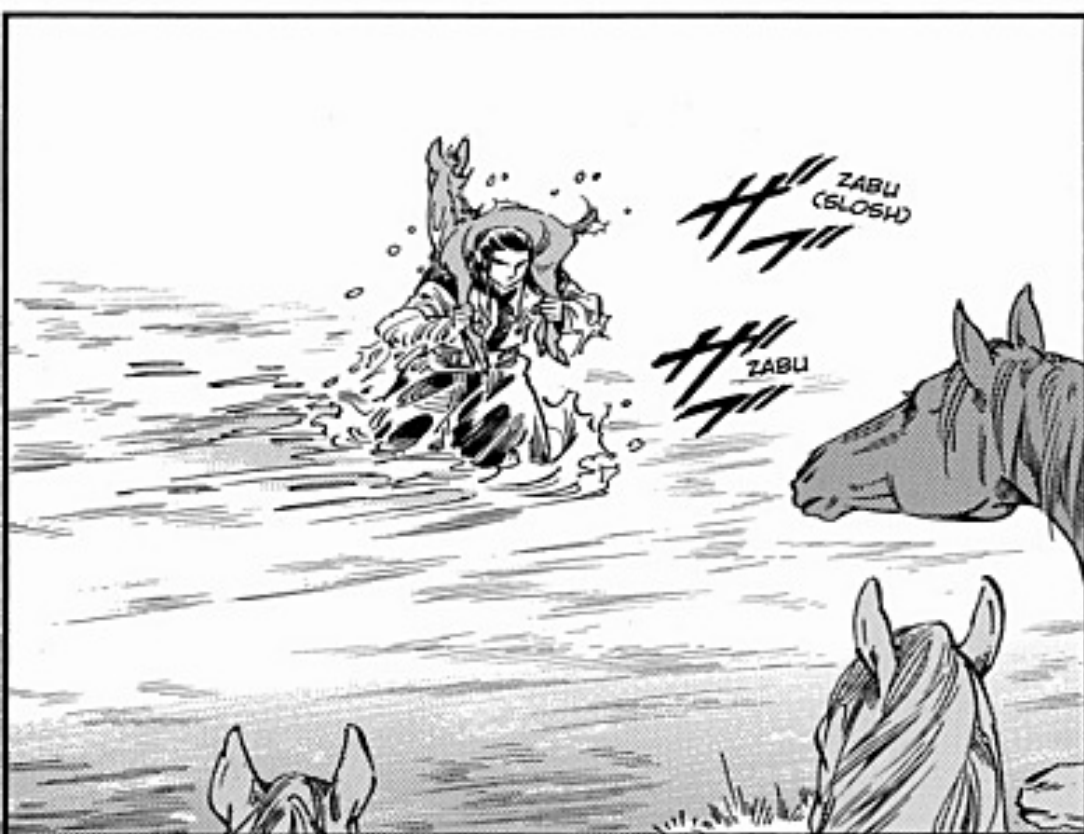
IF THE
NUMBER OF
HIS SHEEP
REPRESENTS
A NOMAD'S
WEALTH...

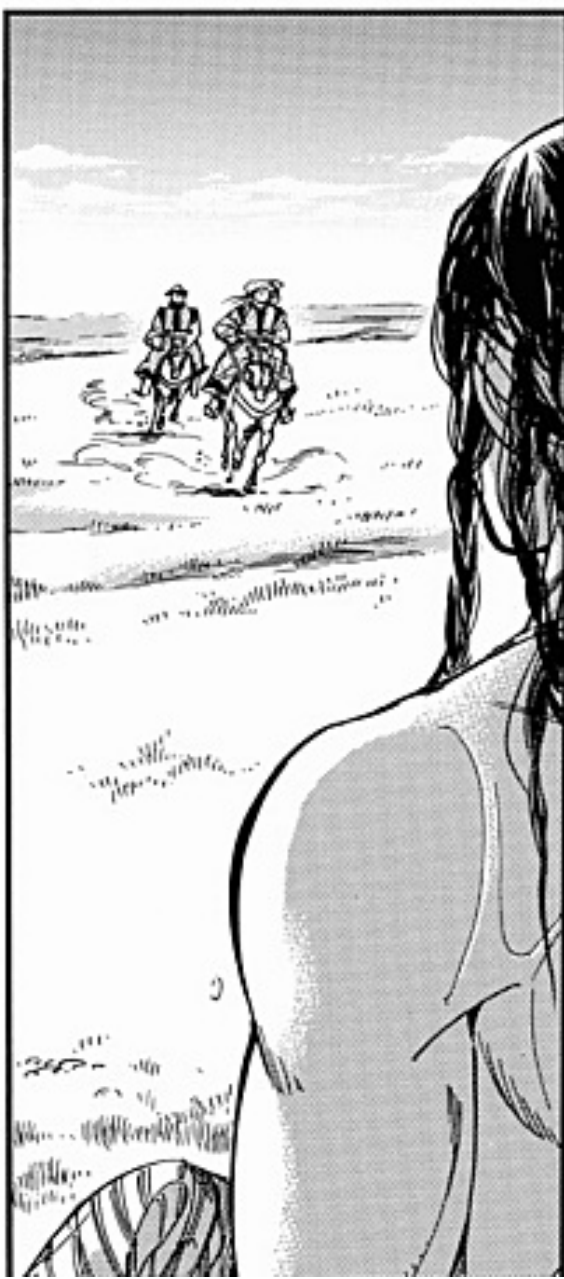
HORSES ARE
LIVESTOCK,
BUT THEY
AREN'T
JUST ANY
LIVESTOCK.

...THEN THE
NUMBER OF
HIS HORSES
REPRESENTS
THE STRENGTH
OF A NOMAD'S
PRIDE.

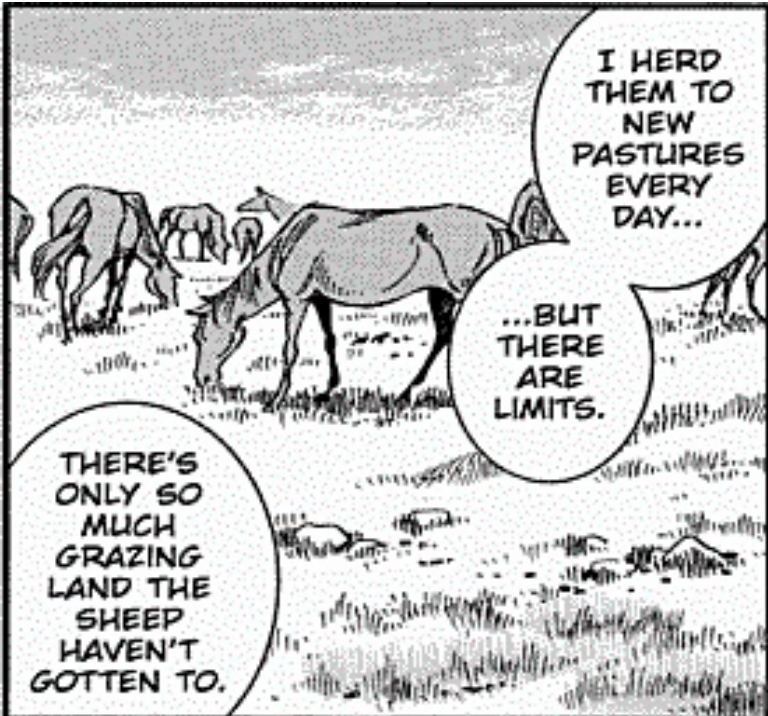












I HERD
THEM TO
NEW
PASTURES
EVERY
DAY...

...BUT
THERE
ARE
LIMITS.

THERE'S
ONLY SO
MUCH
GRAZING
LAND THE
SHEEP
HAVEN'T
GOTTEN TO.



NO,
THEY
DON'T.



HOW
ARE THE
HORSES,
AZEL?

DO THEY
HAVE
ENOUGH
TO GRAZE
ON?



GRAZING
LAND,
HUH...?



I THOUGHT
IT WAS
ODD FOR
YOU TO BE
BRINGING
FOOD...



THE
OLD MEN
HAVE BEEN
ESPECIALLY
CRANKY
LATELY.

LOSING
ALL THAT
LAND TO
THE
NUMAJI
WAS A
BLOW.



EVEN IF
IT BRINGS
SHAME
ON US TO
BUY FEED
GRASS.

THAT'S
BECAUSE
WE'LL HAVE
TO BUY IT
FROM OTH-
ERS IF WE
DON'T HAVE
ENOUGH.



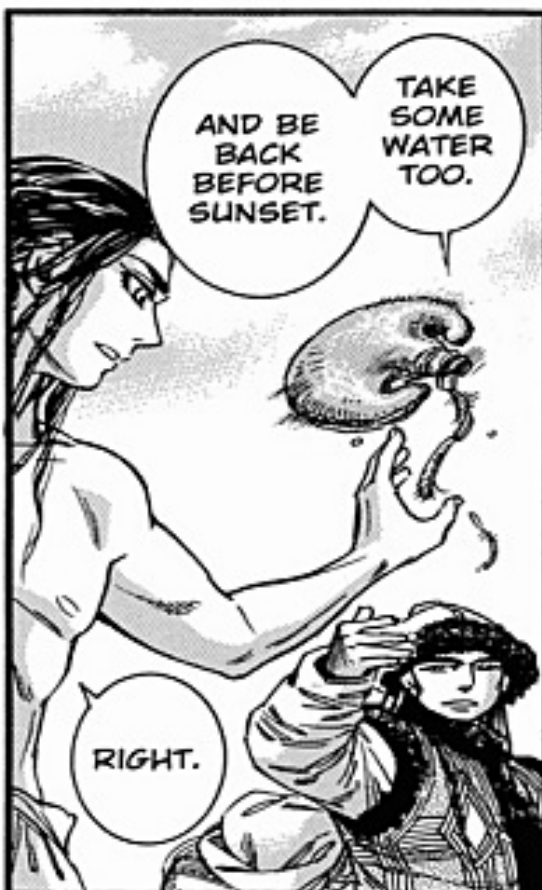
WELL,
THAT ISN'T
THE ONLY
REASON.



WAS THIS
YOUR EXCUSE
TO SLIP
OUT OF THE
COUNCIL
MEETINGS?

SURE!

I DON'T
WANT IT
TAKEN OUT
ON ME!



AND BE
BACK
BEFORE
SUNSET.

TAKE
SOME
WATER
TOO.

RIGHT.



WATCH-
ING THEM
ALL THE
TIME, YOU
DON'T
GET A
CHANCE
TO RELAX.

WE'LL
TAKE
OVER
FOR A
BIT.

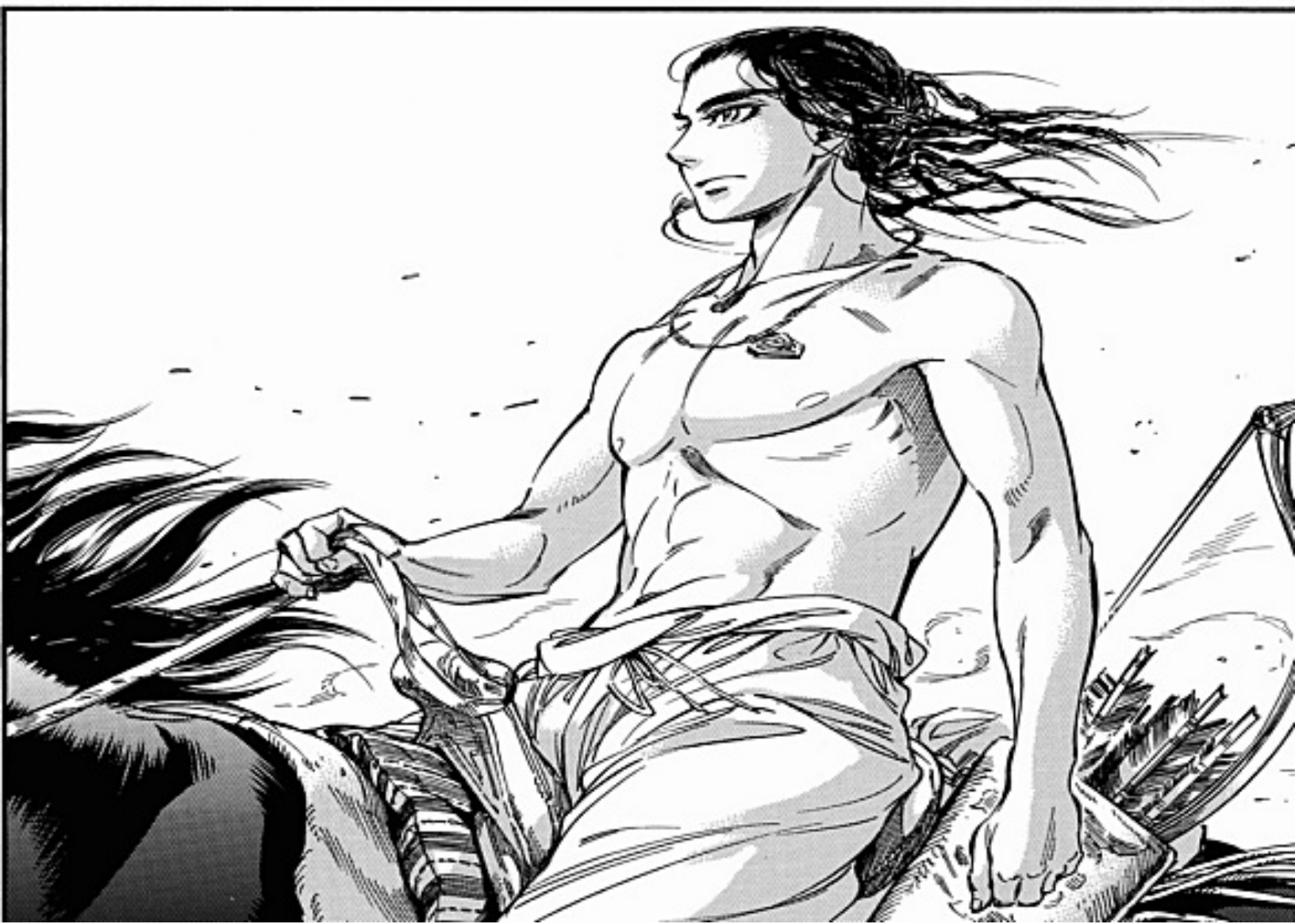


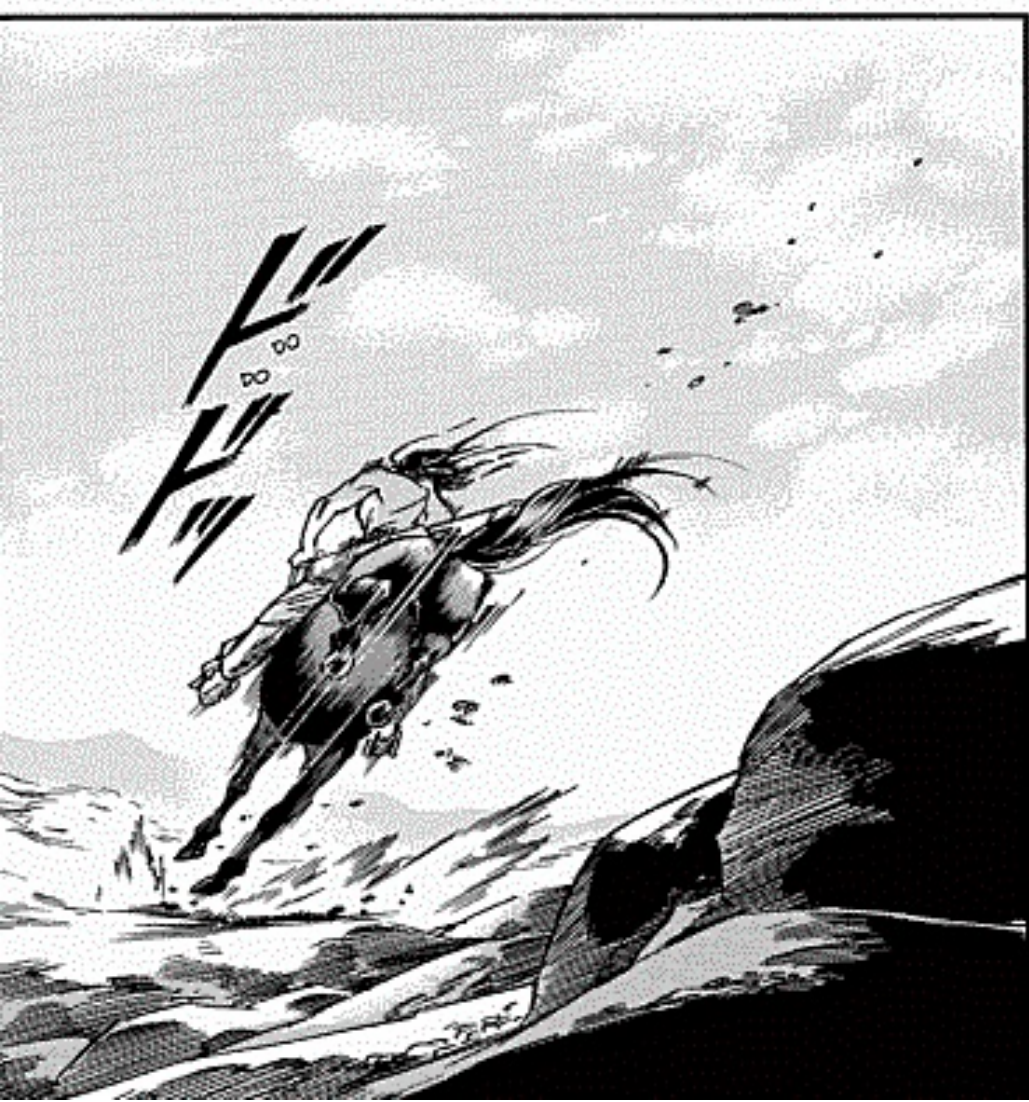
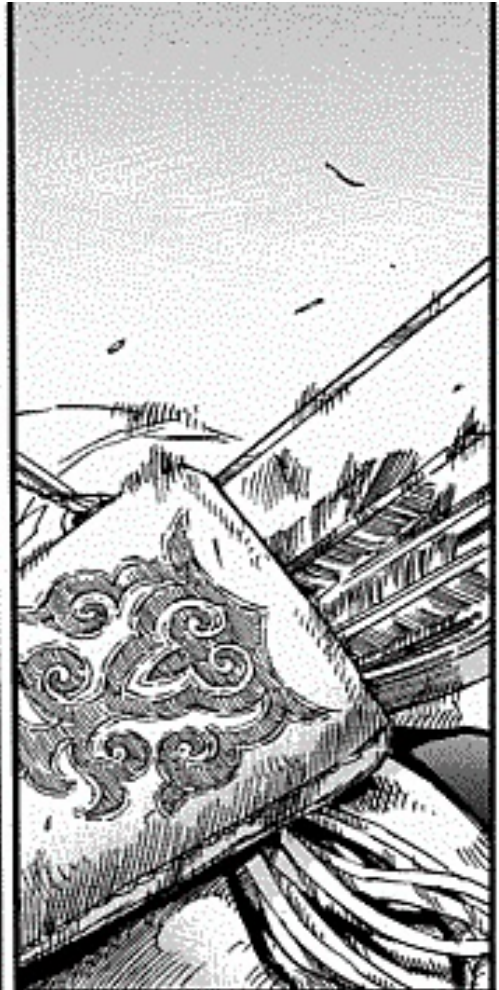
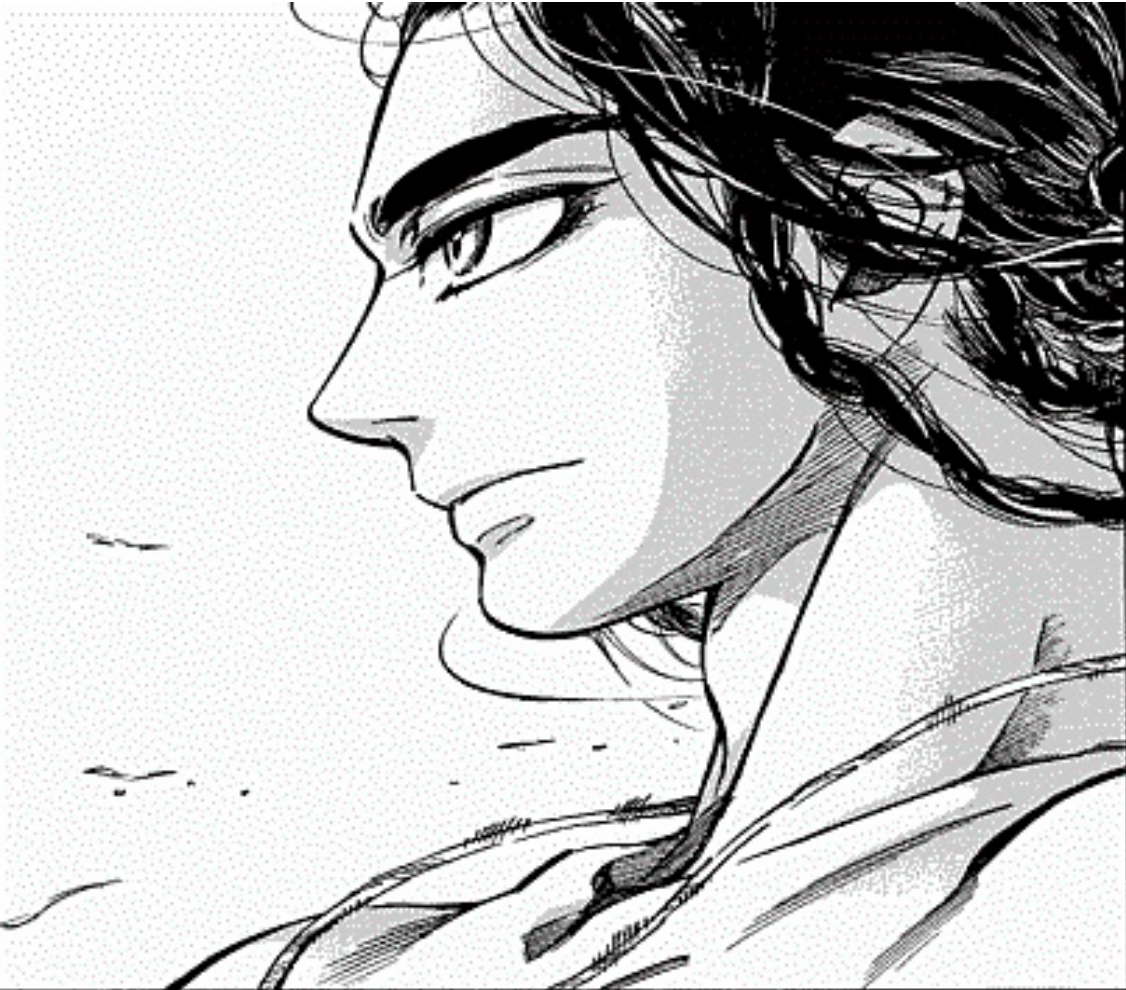
AZEL...

...WE'LL
WATCH THE
HORSES.
YOU TAKE A
GALLOP AND
DRY YOUR-
SELF OFF.

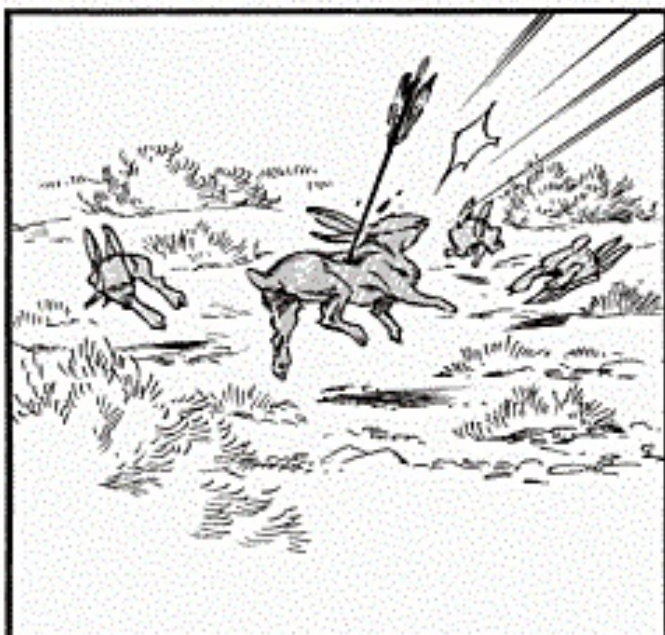
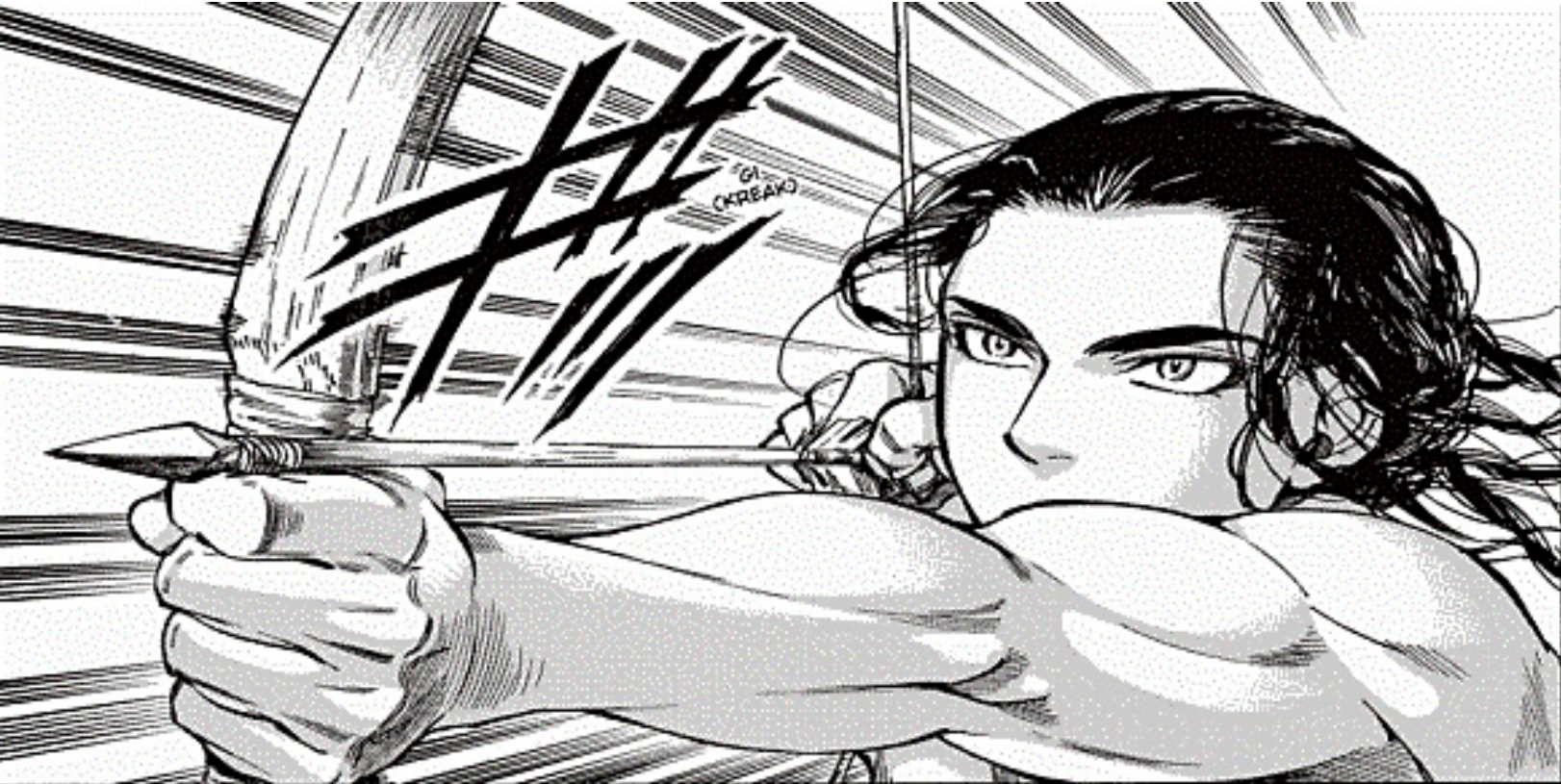


THAT'S
TRUE.









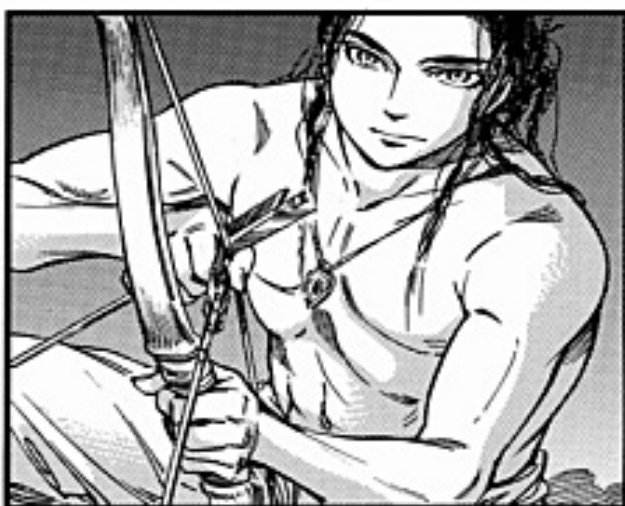
...BUT
THEIR PELTS
DON'T BRING
NEARLY
AS MUCH
AS FOX OR
TIGER.

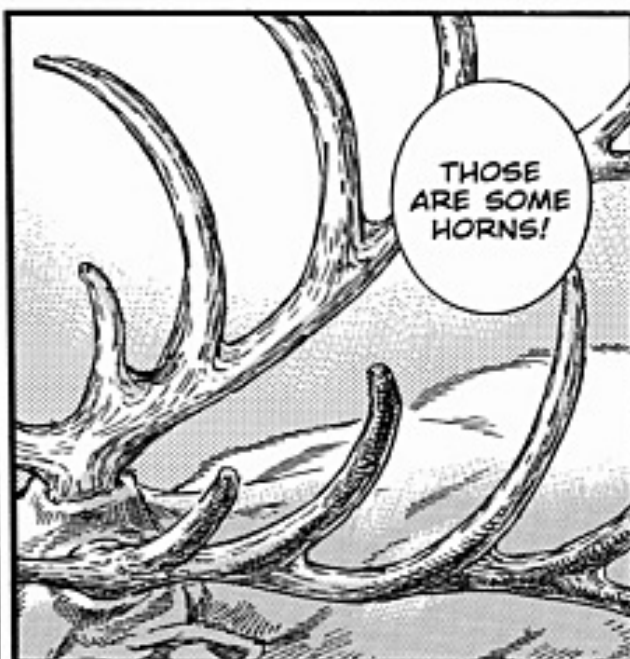
RABBITS
PROVIDE
MEAT...

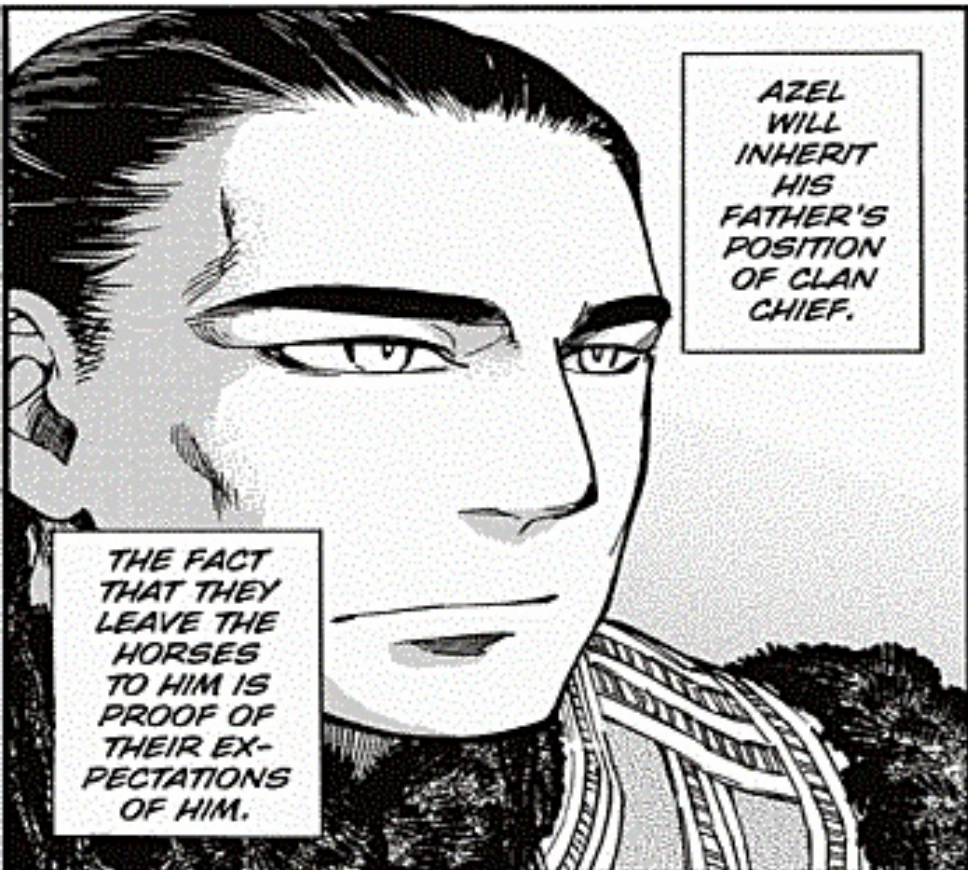


STILL,
ONE HAS
TO GO OUT
HUNTING
REGULAR-
LY...

...OR HIS
BOW ARM
GROWS
WEAK.







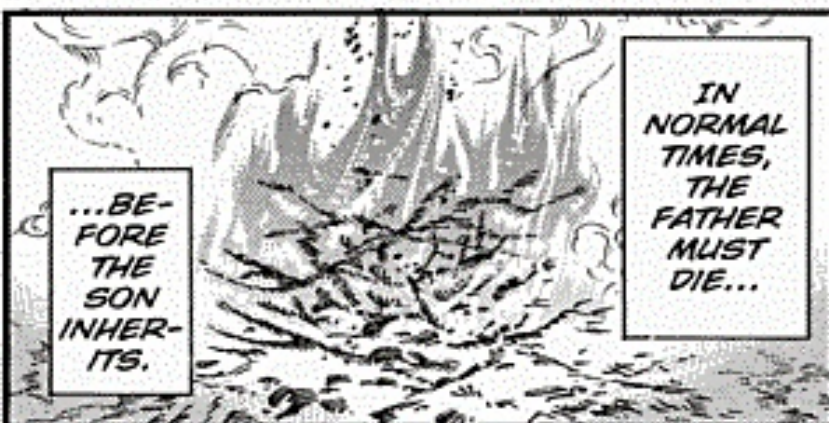
AZEL
WILL
INHERIT
HIS
FATHER'S
POSITION
OF CLAN
CHIEF.

THE FACT
THAT THEY
LEAVE THE
HORSES
TO HIM IS
PROOF OF
THEIR EX-
PECTATIONS
OF HIM.



HORSES
ARE LIVE-
STOCK...

...BUT THEY
AREN'T
JUST ANY
LIVESTOCK.



IN
NORMAL
TIMES,
THE
FATHER
MUST
DIE...

...BE-
FORE
THE
SON
INHER-
ITS.



HUH!?

THAT'S
MORE
WORK
LATER.
LET'S EAT
IT ALL
NOW!

LEAVE
HALF.



I'M NOT
COMPLAIN-
ING,
I'M.....

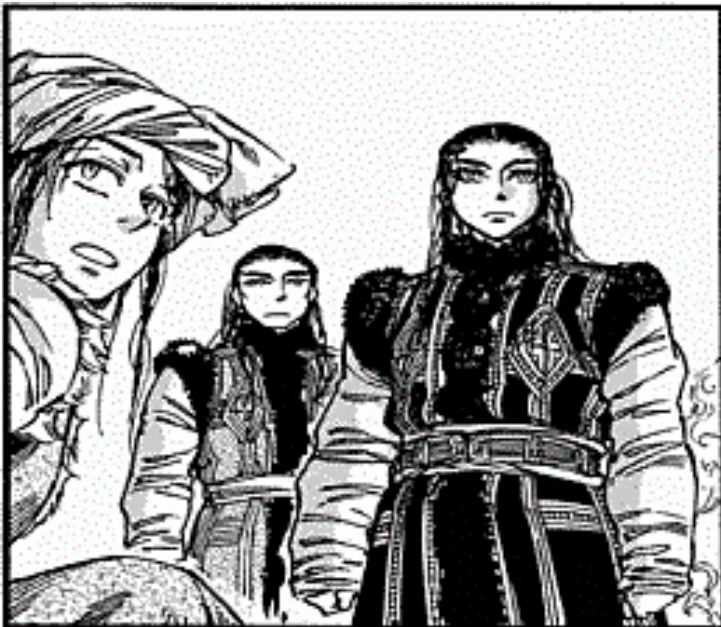


EITHER
DO IT
YOURSELF,
OR DON'T
COMPLAIN!

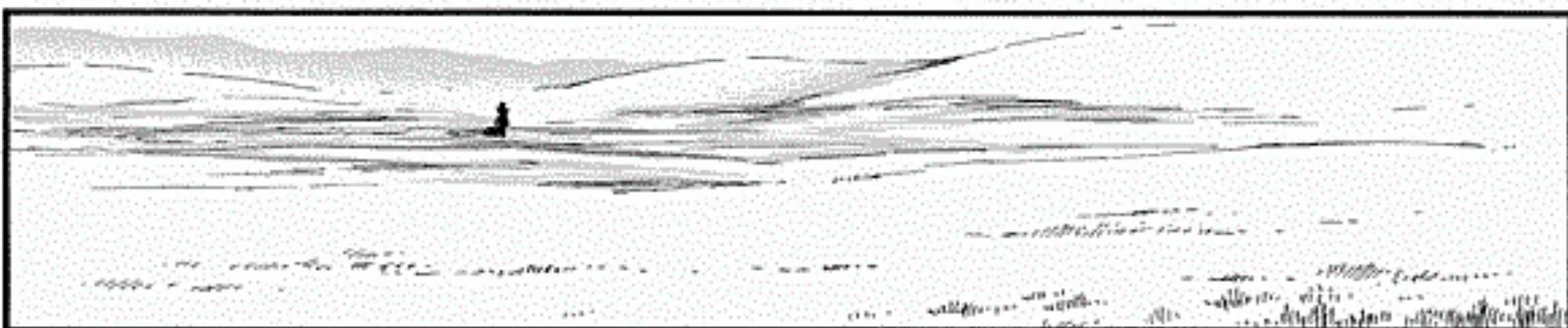
SHUT
UP!

YOU
ALWAYS
CUT IT
UP TOO
FINE.

IN
NORMAL
TIMES...



WHAT
IS IT,
AZEL?

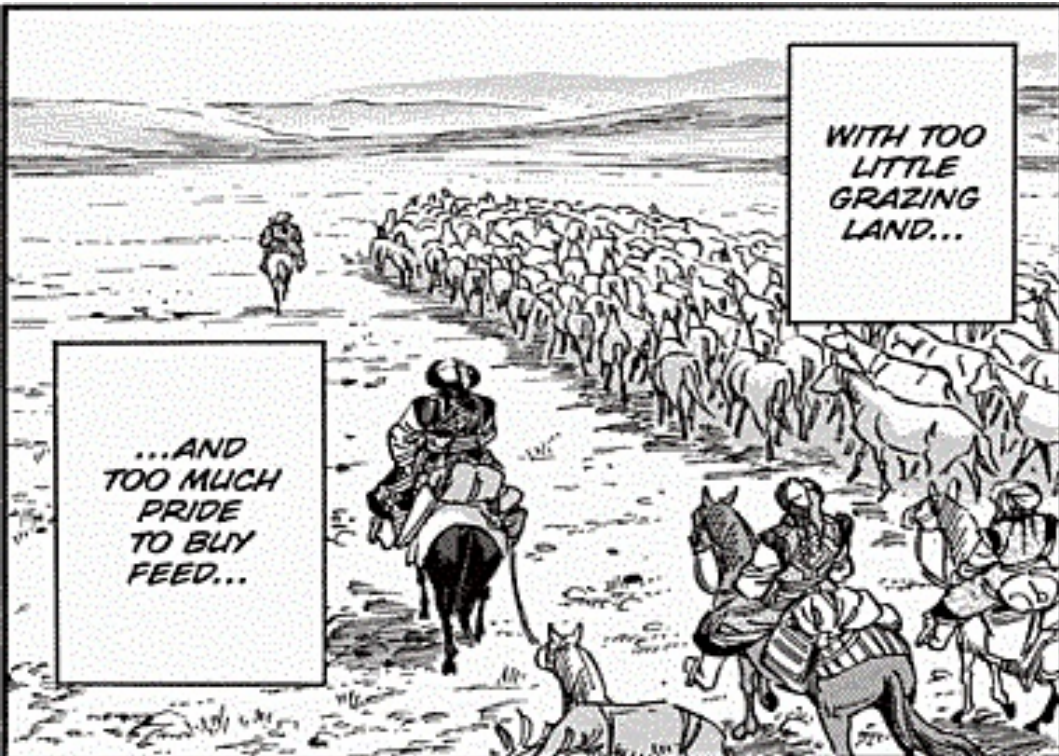


HERE
COMES
TROUBLE.
IT'S
UNCLE
TOGAN.

THEY
REALIZED
WE
SKIPPED
OUT.







WITH TOO
LITTLE
GRAZING
LAND...

...AND
TOO MUCH
PRIDE
TO BUY
FEED...



...THE ONLY
REMAINING
OPTION IS TO
SEIZE WHAT
IS NEEDED.



THE
BATTLE
BEGINS.

CHAPTER 30
MEETING WITH
THE BADAN

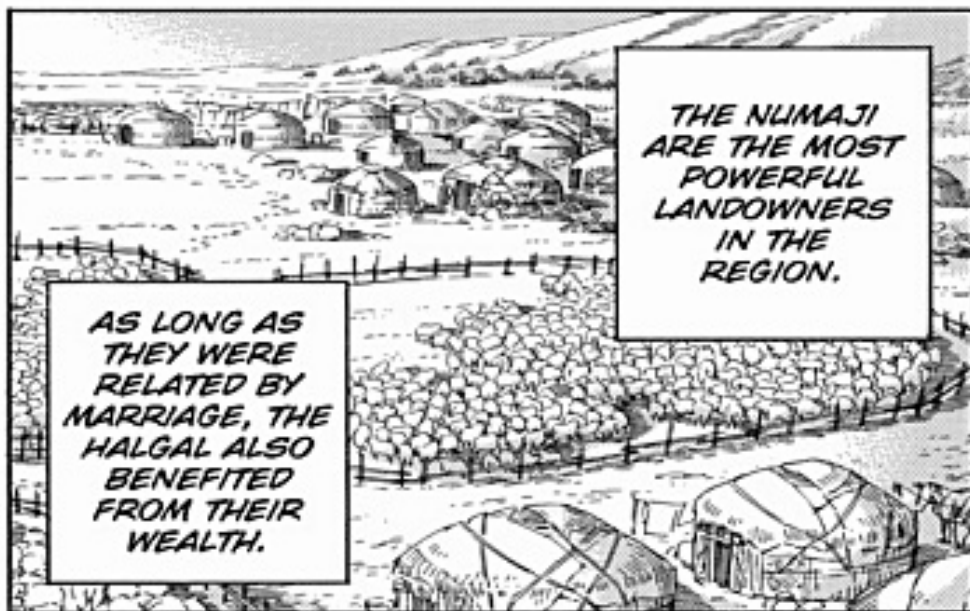


IT ALL
STARTED
WHEN A
HALGAL GIRL
SENT TO THE
NUMAJI CLAN
AS A BRIDE
DIED.



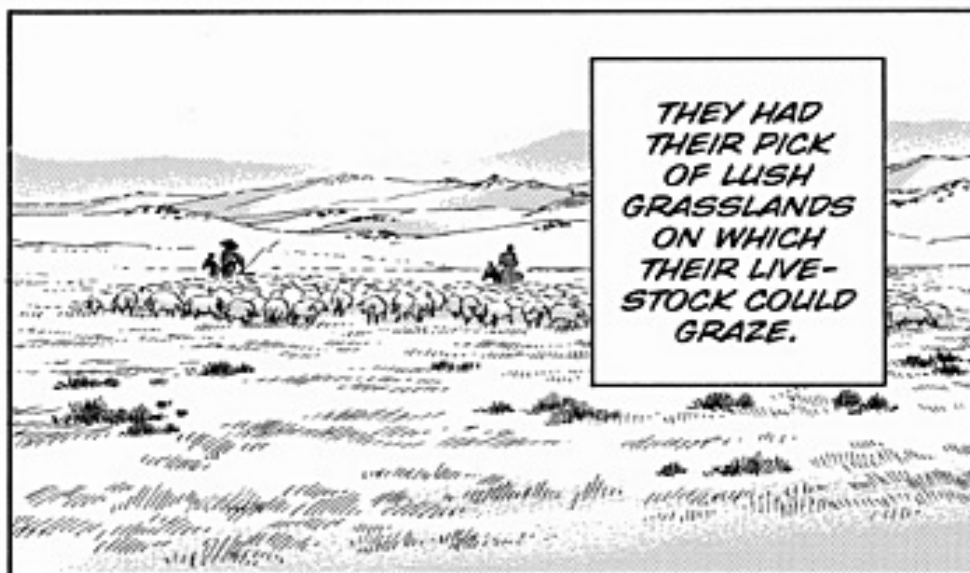
BUT THOSE
LANDS
WERE ONLY
ACCESSIBLE
AS LONG AS
THERE WAS
A BRIDE.

WITHOUT A
FAMILY TIE,
THERE WAS NO
REASON FOR
THE NUMAJI
TO CONTINUE
TO ALLOW
ACCESS TO
THEIR LANDS.



THE NUMAJI
ARE THE MOST
POWERFUL
LANDOWNERS
IN THE
REGION.

AS LONG AS
THEY WERE
RELATED BY
MARRIAGE, THE
HALGAL ALSO
BENEFITED
FROM THEIR
WEALTH.



THEY HAD
THEIR PICK
OF LUSH
GRASSLANDS
ON WHICH
THEIR LIVE-
STOCK COULD
GRAZE.



THIS
CAUSED
A GREAT
DEAL OF
DISTRESS
AMONG THE
HALGAL.



THE
NUMAJI
TOLD THE
HALGAL
TO LEAVE
THEIR
LANDS.



"AND WITHOUT
LIVESTOCK,
OUR PEOPLE
WON'T BE
ABLE TO
SURVIVE."



"WINTER
WILL
COME.

"WITHOUT
ENOUGH
LAND TO
KEEP THEM
FED, THE
LIVESTOCK
WILL DIE OF
STARVA-
TION.



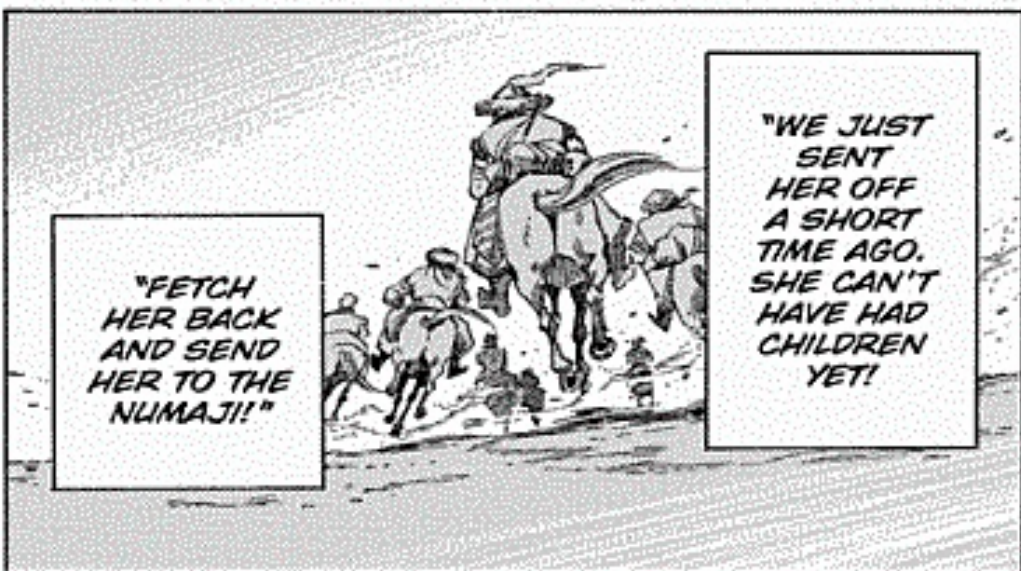
"WHAT
HAPPENS
TO US
WITHOUT
THAT
LAND?



"SEND
SOME OTHER
MARRIAGE-
ABLE GIRL!
I DON'T
CARE WHO!"



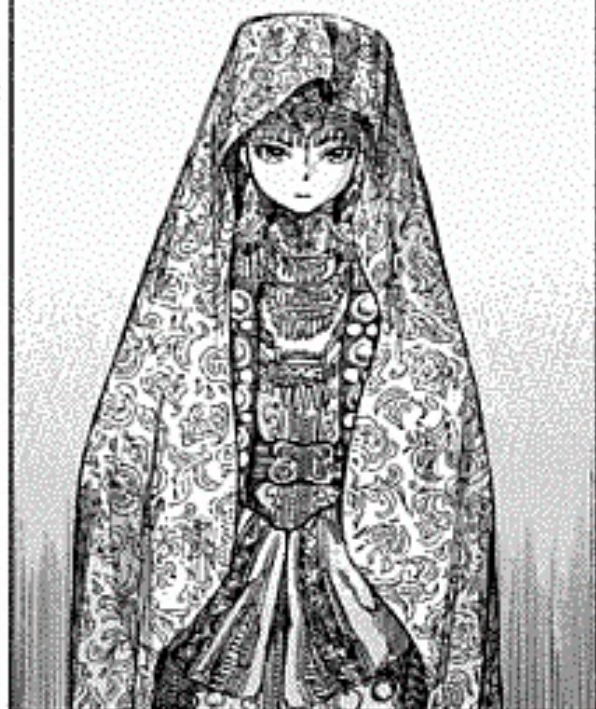
"WE HAVE TO
KEEP OUR
MARRIAGE-BOND
WITH THE NUMAJI
NO MATTER
WHAT IT TAKES!"



"FETCH
HER BACK
AND SEND
HER TO THE
NUMAJI!"

"WE JUST
SENT
HER OFF
A SHORT
TIME AGO.
SHE CAN'T
HAVE HAD
CHILDREN
YET!"

THE HALGAL
SET THEIR
SIGHTS ON
AMIR.



...AND THE
HALGAL
WERE
UNABLE TO
RETRIEVE
AMIR.

THE
TOWNS-
PEOPLE
PUT UP
STIFF
RESIS-
TANCE...

BUT IT DID
NOT GO AS
THEY HAD
PLANNED.

SOON THE
NUMAJI
FORCED
THE HALGAL
OFF THEIR
GRAZING
LANDS.

CONDITIONS
BECAME
MORE
STRAINED.

THEY HAD TO
FIND NEW
GRAZING LAND
IMMEDIATELY
FOR THEIR OWN
SURVIVAL.

AND IF NOT,
THE ONLY
OPTION THAT
REMAINED TO
THEM WAS TO
STEAL IT...





IF
YOU HAVE
SOMETHING
TO SAY,
SAY IT.



AZEL,
WHAT
IS IT?



YOU
FAILED
ONCE.

THERE'S
NO MORE
TIME TO
WASTE.



FATHER...

...WOULD
IT NOT BE
MORE TO OUR
ADVANTAGE
TO SEEK HELP
FROM SOME-
ONE ELSE?



AMIR ALONE
COULD HAVE
SOLVED OUR
PROBLEM.

A PROBLEM
WITH A SIMPLE
SOLUTION—
BUT NOW IT'S
GOTTEN
COMPLICATED.



WE CAN
FINISH
THIS MORE
QUICKLY
WITH ALLIES
ON OUR
SIDE.

WOULD
YOU
RATHER WE
SACRIFICE
MORE THAN
WE NEED
TO?

TO EXPECT
HIS AIMS TO
BE IN LINE
WITH OURS
MAY NOT BE
WISE.

FATHER,
OUR CLANS
SEPARATED
LONG AGO...

THE BADAN
SHARE OUR
BLOOD.
WE'RE
BRANCHES
OF THE
SAME
FAMILY.

WHAT
DO YOU
KNOW
ABOUT
IT?

WE
CAN'T
TRUST
THEM.

WE
WILL ALL
BECOME
MERE
PAWNS
FOR THEIR
PURPOSES!

WHAT
OF IT?

THERE'S
ALSO A
RUMOR THAT
THE BADAN
ARE IN BED
WITH THE
RUSSIANS.

KEEP
A
SHARP
EYE.

WE'RE
GETTING
CLOSE.

BE
SILENT,
AZEL!!

YOU KNOW
NOTHING!!
DO NOT
PRETEND
YOU DO!!

DOES
A SON
DEFY
HIS OWN
FATHER
!!?





I'M
AL-TAMUS
OF THE
BADAN.

PLEASE
MAKE
YOURSELF
COMFORT-
ABLE.



I AM
BERKHRAT,
LEADER
OF THE
HALGAL.

I AM
PLEASED
TO FIND
YOU IN
GOOD
HEALTH.



WE'VE
HAD HARD
TIMES WHEN
WE'VE LOST
LIVESTOCK
TOO.

I KNOW
HOW BAD
WINTER
CAN MAKE
THINGS.



I
ALREADY
KNOW
YOUR
SITUA-
TION.

YOU'VE
GOT IT
ROUGH,
EH?



SO?
WHERE IS
THE LAND
WE'RE
GOING TO
TAKE?

SOME-
PLACE
CLOSE BY
WOULD BE
PREFER-
ABLE.



WE WOULD
NEVER CLOSE
OUR EARS TO
THE CRIES OF
STARVING
SHEEP!

SO OF
COURSE
WE'LL
HELP!



WHERE IS IT?



THERE'S SOME BAD BLOOD BETWEEN US AND THAT TOWN, SO WE'D LIKE TO TAKE IT.

THERE'S GOOD LAND THERE TOO.



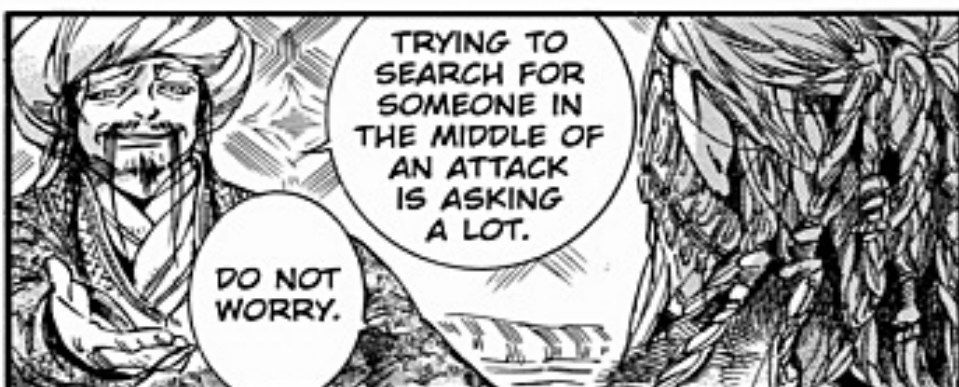
WE HAVE A PLACE IN MIND.

A VILLAGE JUST BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.



HMM.

NOT BAD.



TRYING TO SEARCH FOR SOMEONE IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ATTACK IS ASKING A LOT.

DO NOT WORRY.



.....I SUPPOSE NOT.



WON'T SHE ALERT THE TOWNS-PEOPLE?

WE WILL DRAW HER OUT BEFORE THE FIGHTING BEGINS.

SHE WILL NOT DISOBEY HER FATHER.



ONE OF MY DAUGHTERS IS THERE.

I WANT TO RECLAIM HER WHILE WE ARE THERE.



THAT'S
WHERE WE
ATTACK.

THEN
IT'S DE-
CIDED!

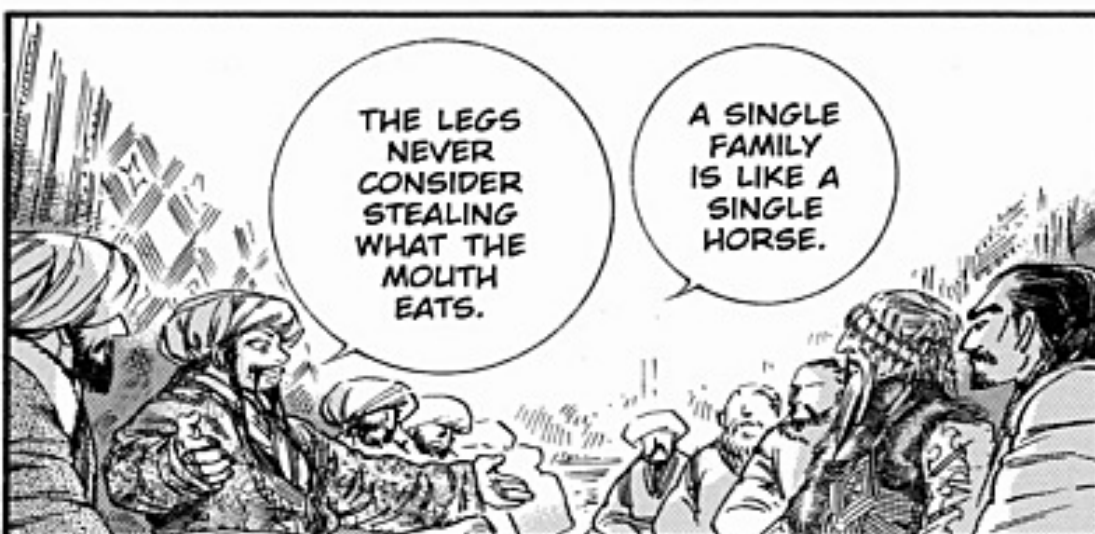


WE
DON'T
NEED TO
BOTHER
WITH
THAT.

OH...

...LET US
DISCUSS
HOW TO
DIVIDE THE
SPOILS.

...NOW...



THE LEGS
NEVER
CONSIDER
STEALING
WHAT THE
MOUTH
EATS.

A SINGLE
FAMILY
IS LIKE A
SINGLE
HORSE.



AFTER
ALL, IT'S
THE ENTIRE
BODY THAT
PROSPERS
BECAUSE
OF IT.







THE
GUNPOWDER
IS ALL
PREPARED.

YOU SEE
TWO HUNDRED
SMALLER ARMS IN
FRONT, THOSE ARE
GRENADES IN BACK,
AND HERE ARE
EIGHTEEN LIGHT
CANNONS.

THE
FIREARMS
ARE BOTH
MUZZLE-LOADING
AND BREECH-
LOADING.
ALTOGETHER
WE HAVE

I FORGET
JUST HOW
MANY, BUT
THERE ARE
PLENTY OF
THEM.



AND
ENOUGH
BULLETS TO
CHOKE A
HORSE.

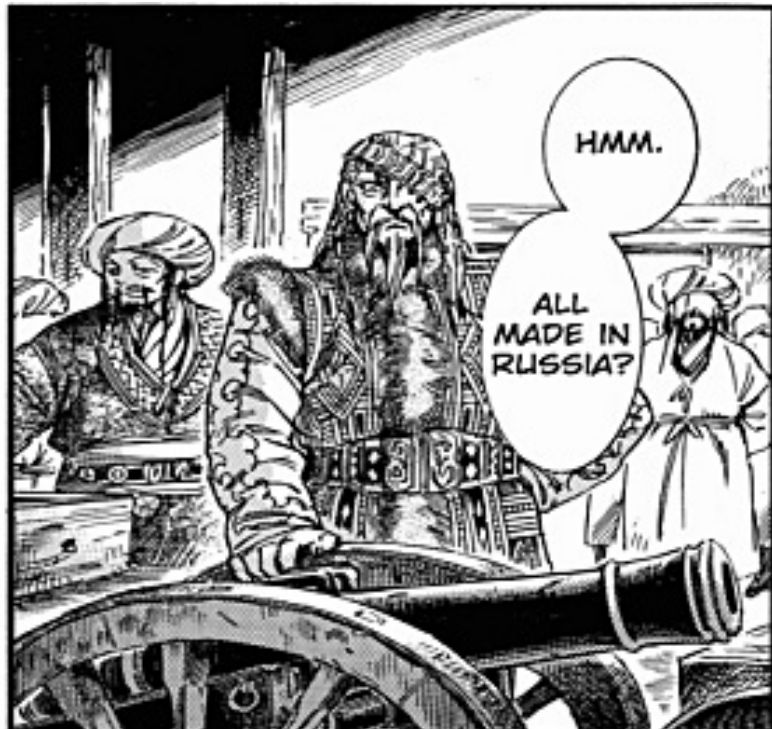


AND ANYONE CAN USE THEM?



.....I BOUGHT THEM.

THE RUSSIANS MAY BE UNCULTURED PROVINCIALS, BUT THEY MAKE GOOD WEAPONS.



HMM.

ALL MADE IN RUSSIA?



AND HERE WE HAVE SOME EXPERIENCED MEN TO SHOW YOU HOW.



EVEN A CHILD COULD USE THESE.

THESE ARE LIKE TOYS COMPARED TO BOWS.



IF WE KILL THEM ALL, NOBODY WILL BE LEFT TO MAKE A FUSS.



TRUE.



WITH ALL THIS, ANY VILLAGE WILL FALL IN HALF A DAY.





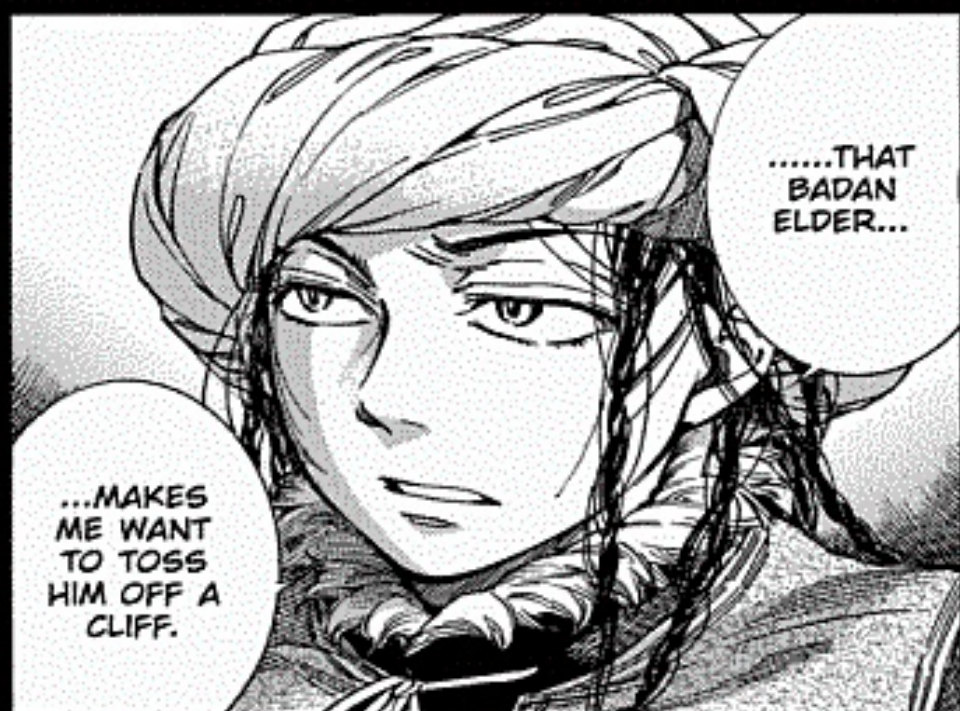




HE'LL
HELP US
BUT ISN'T
INTERESTED
IN DIVIDING
THE
SPOILS?

DO
DEALS
THAT
GOOD
EXIST?

EVEN I
CAN SEE
THAT, AND
I'M AN
IDIOT!



.....THAT
BADAN
ELDER...

...MAKES
ME WANT
TO TOSS
HIM OFF A
CLIFF.



MUCH
THE
SAME
FOR
ME.

BAI-
MAT?



IT'S
HARD TO
SEE PEOPLE
BEING
DRAWN IN
BY SHORT-
TERM
BAIT.

ESPECIALLY
WHEN IT'S
YOUR OWN
FAMILY.



I WANT
TO SLAP
OUR UNCLES
AND WAKE
THEM UP.

BUT
IF I DID,
THEY'D
KILL ME.

AND I
DON'T FEEL
LIKE DYING
JUST YET.



I
CONSIDERED
TAKING
EVERYONE
HERE AND
BEATING
THEM TO
DEATH.



EVERYONE
LIVES
THAT WAY.

STEALING
IN ORDER
TO
SURVIVE.

I CAN
UNDER-
STAND
THAT.



SCARY.

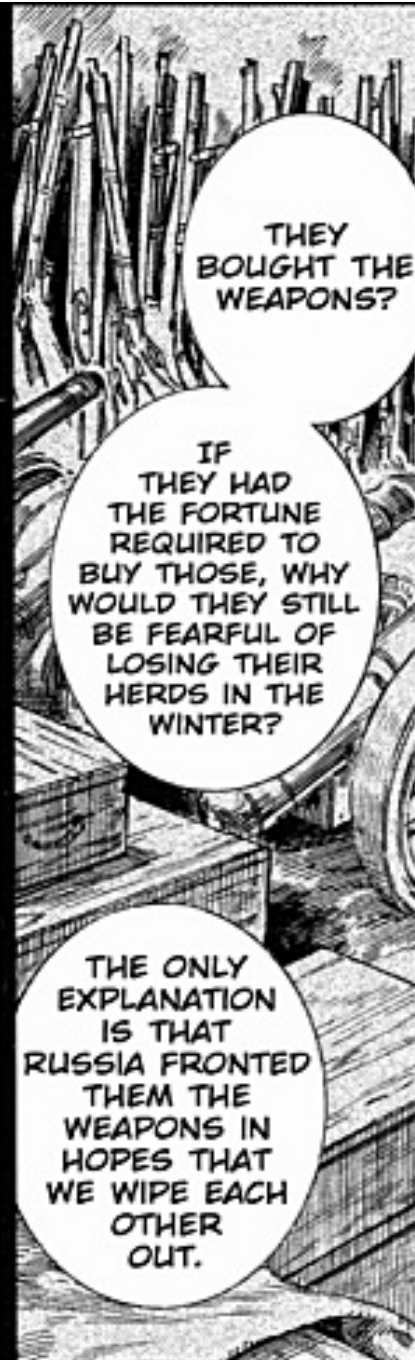


SIMPLE
AS THAT.

IF WE WIN,
WE GAIN; IF
WE LOSE,
WE LOSE.



HORSES
LIVE OFF
THE LAND.
BIRDS FLY
THROUGH
THE SKY.



THEY
BOUGHT THE
WEAPONS?

IF
THEY HAD
THE FORTUNE
REQUIRED TO
BUY THOSE, WHY
WOULD THEY STILL
BE FEARFUL OF
LOSING THEIR
HERDS IN THE
WINTER?

THE ONLY
EXPLANATION
IS THAT
RUSSIA FRONTED
THEM THE
WEAPONS IN
HOPES THAT
WE WIPE EACH
OTHER
OUT.



HOWEVER,
WE ARE TO
USE OUR OWN
STRENGTH
IN ALL THAT.

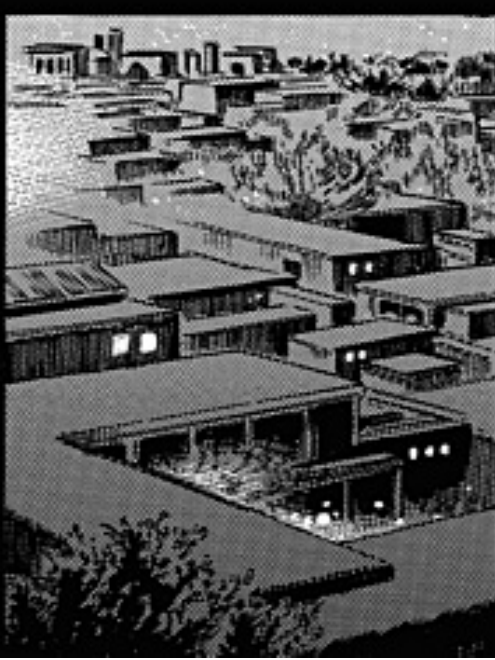


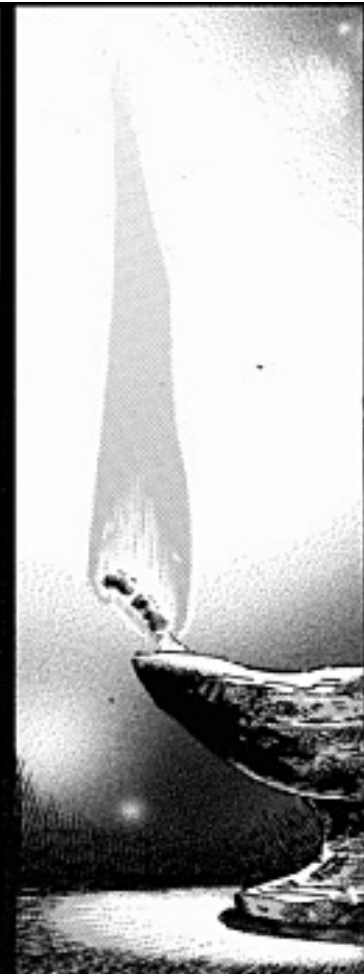
WELL,
YEAH.

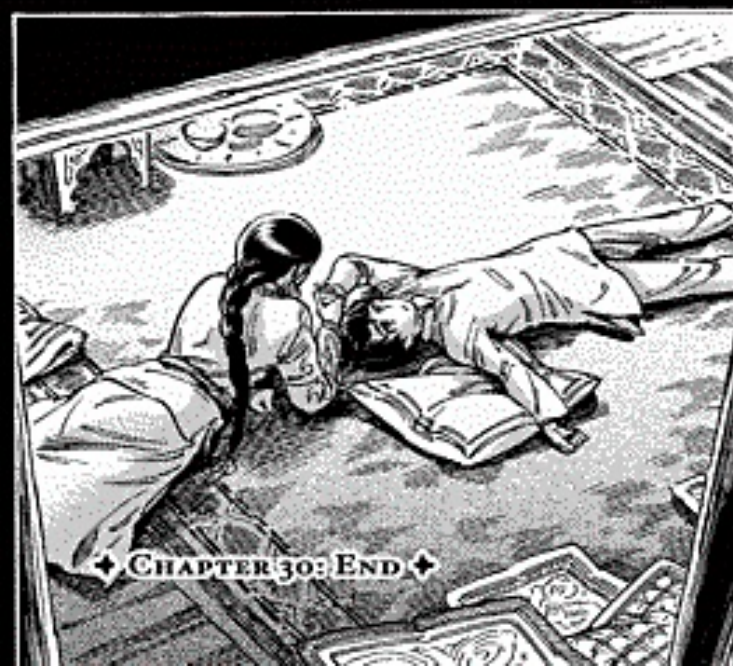


AND
WE LIVE
FREELY AS
NO MAN'S
PAWN.

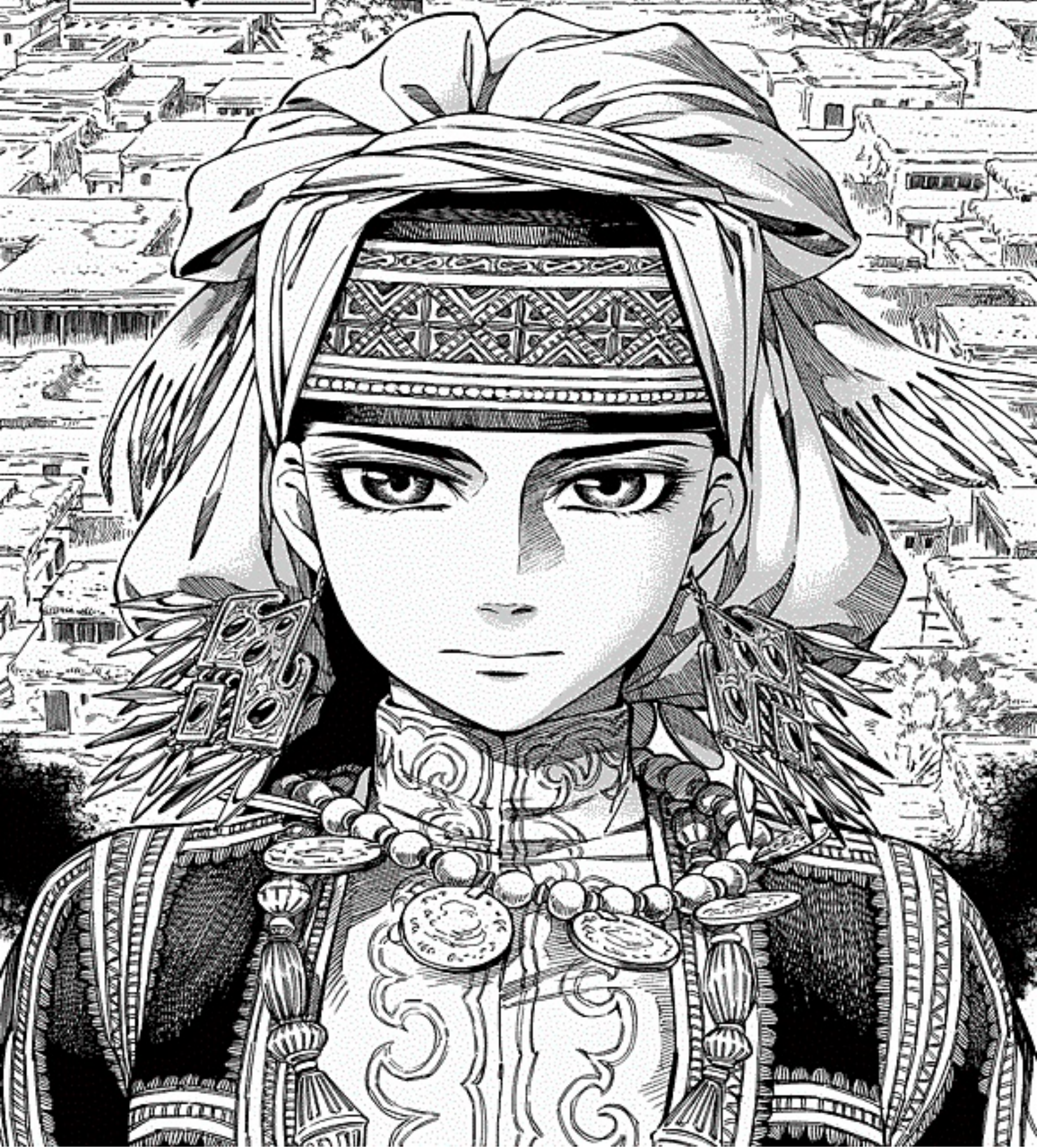
WE WOULD
RATHER DIE
THAN DO
RUSSIA'S
DIRTY WORK
FOR THEM.

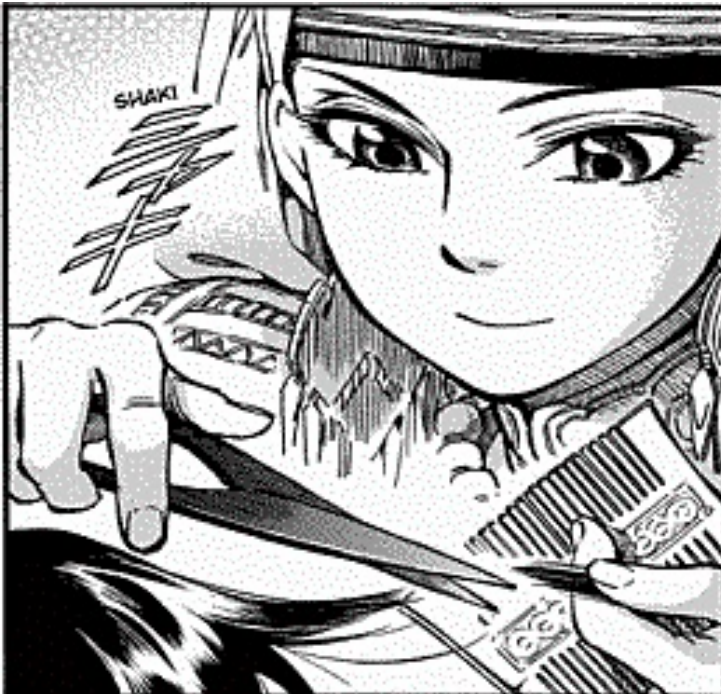




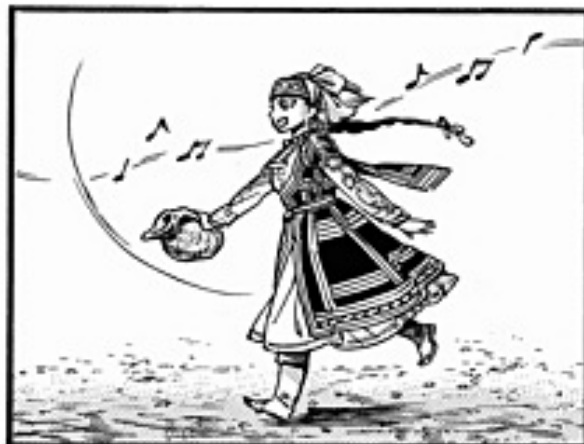


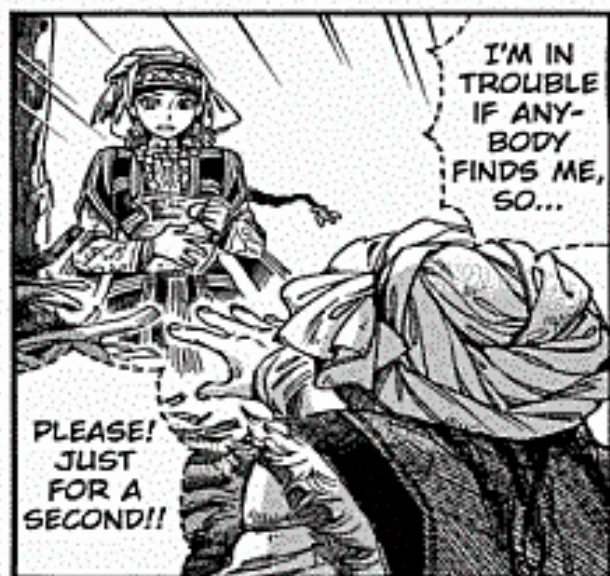
◆
CHAPTER 31
CANNON
BARRAGE
◆















WELL,
NOW
THEY'RE
RUSSIAN
STOOGES.

YOUR
FATHER AND
THE ELDERS
HAVE
THROWN IN
THEIR LOTS
WITH THE
BADAN.



WHY!?

WHAT
DOES
THAT
MEAN!?



YOU
REMEMBER
THE
BADAN?

...
THEY'RE
DISTANT
RELA-
TIONS...

IF I
RECALL...



.....



THIS
ISN'T JUST
A FIGHT
BETWEEN
TWO
FAMILIES!

THEY WANT
TO SEIZE
ALL OF THIS
LAND, AND
THEY'RE
SERIOUS!



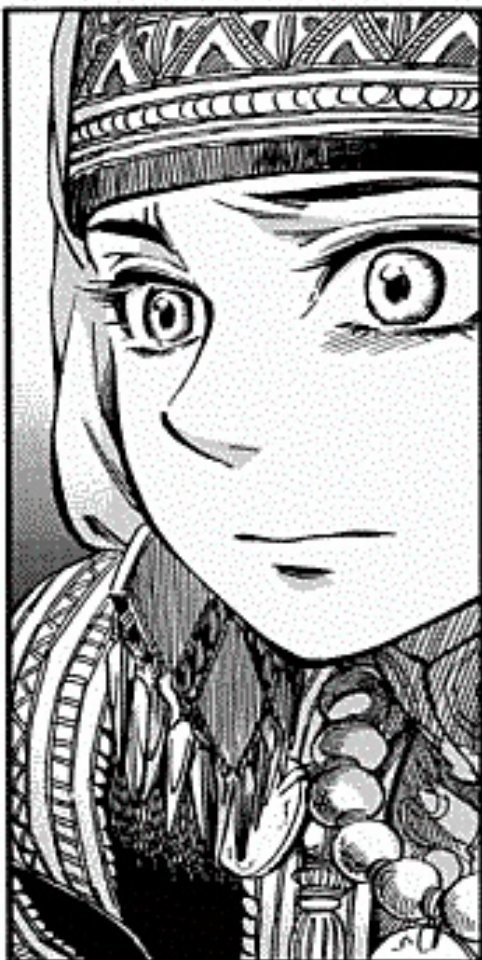
THEY'VE
GOT CANNONS,
GUNS, AND
A WHOLE
MOUNTAIN OF
RUSSIAN-MADE
WEAPONS.

AND
THEY'RE
HEADED
HERE.



I HATE
TO SAY
IT, BUT
I THINK
THEY'VE
BEEN
CONNED.

COM-
PLETELY
TAKEN IN
BY SWEET-
SOUNDING
PROMISES.



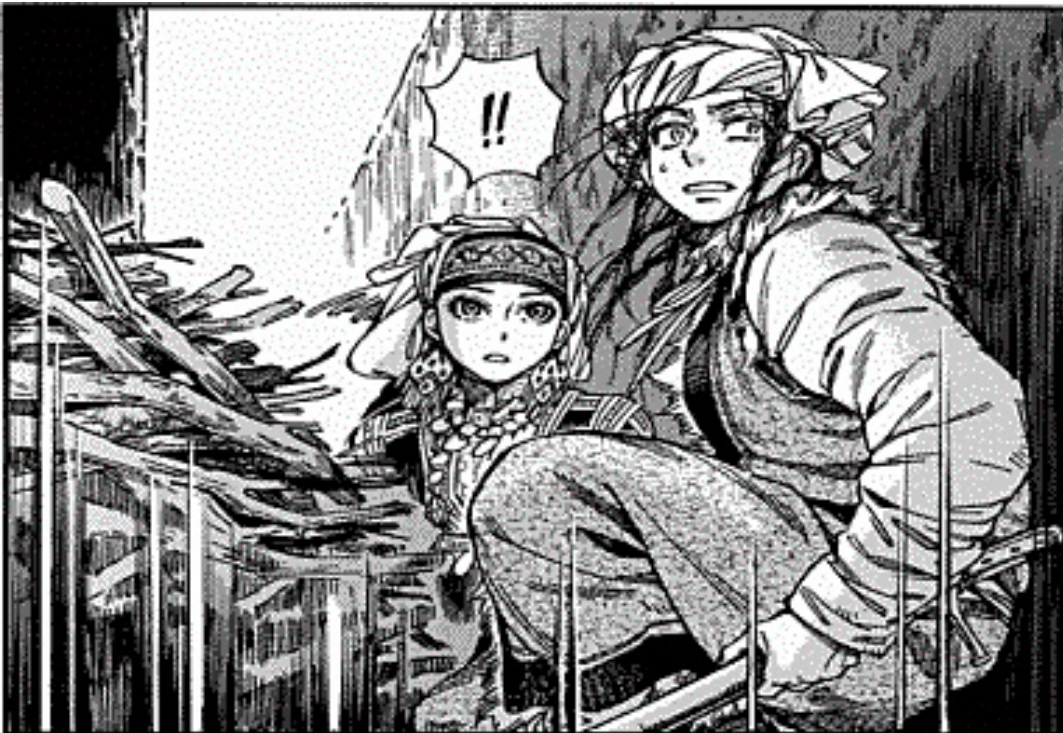


IT ISN'T A
JOKE, OKAY?
I'M NOT EX-
AGGERATING!

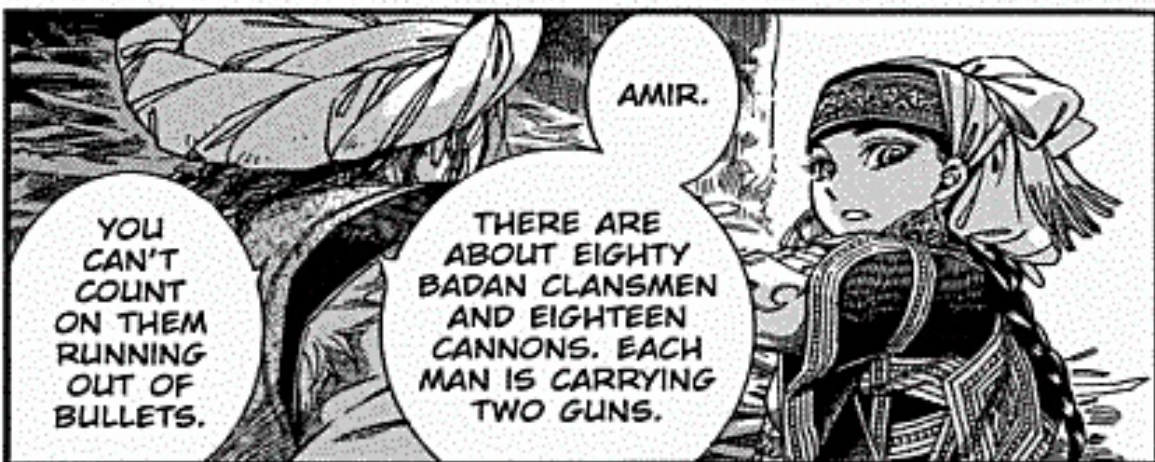
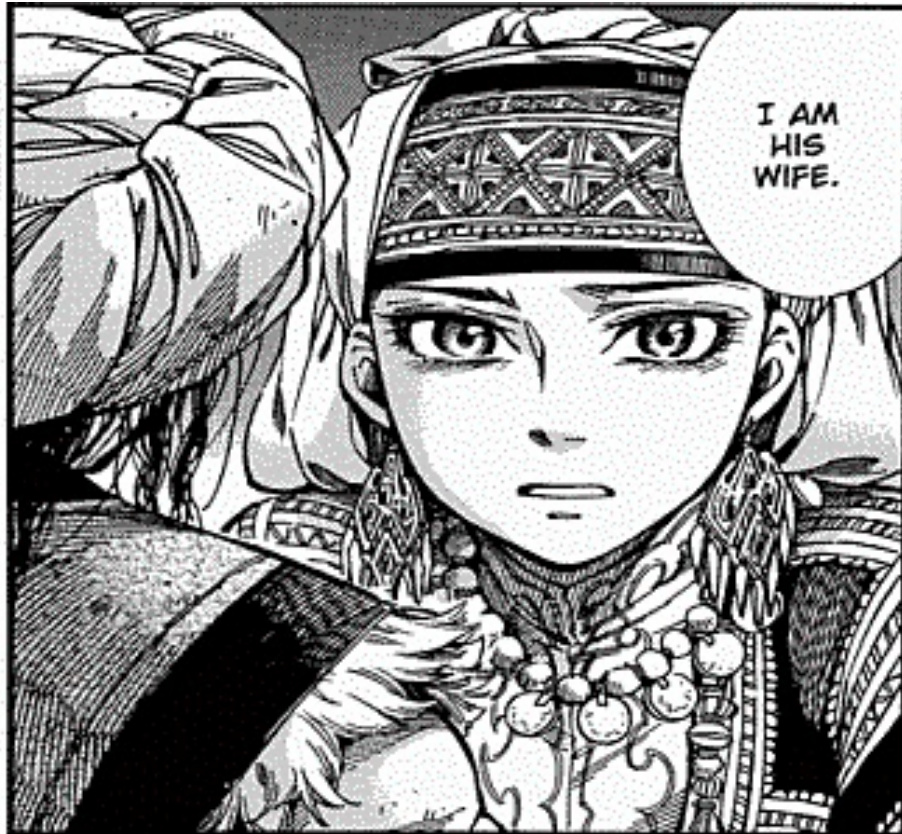


.....
WAIT...

LISTEN
...









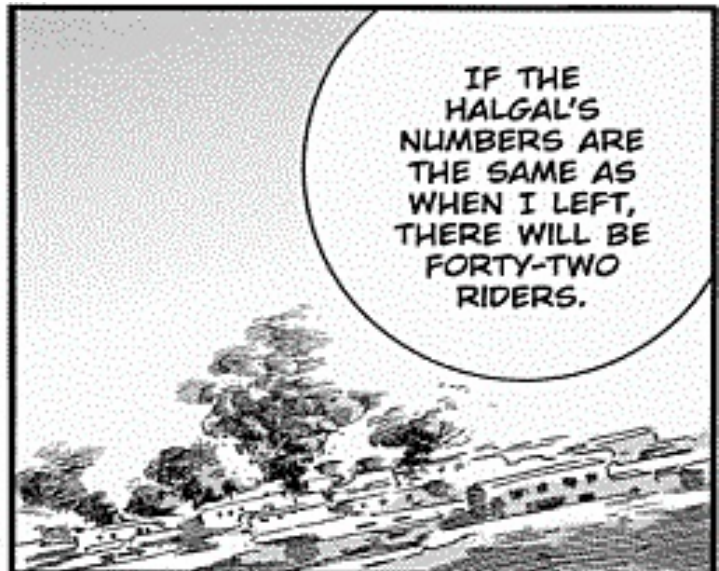






YOU
MUST
NOT LET
THEM
SIGHT
YOU.

THEY WILL
CARRY BOWS
AND SWORDS,
ALL OF THEM
MORE SKILLED
THAN I AM.



IF THE
HALGAL'S
NUMBERS ARE
THE SAME AS
WHEN I LEFT,
THERE WILL BE
FORTY-TWO
RIDERS.



WE
NEED A
BARRI-
CADE TO
STOP THE
HORSES.

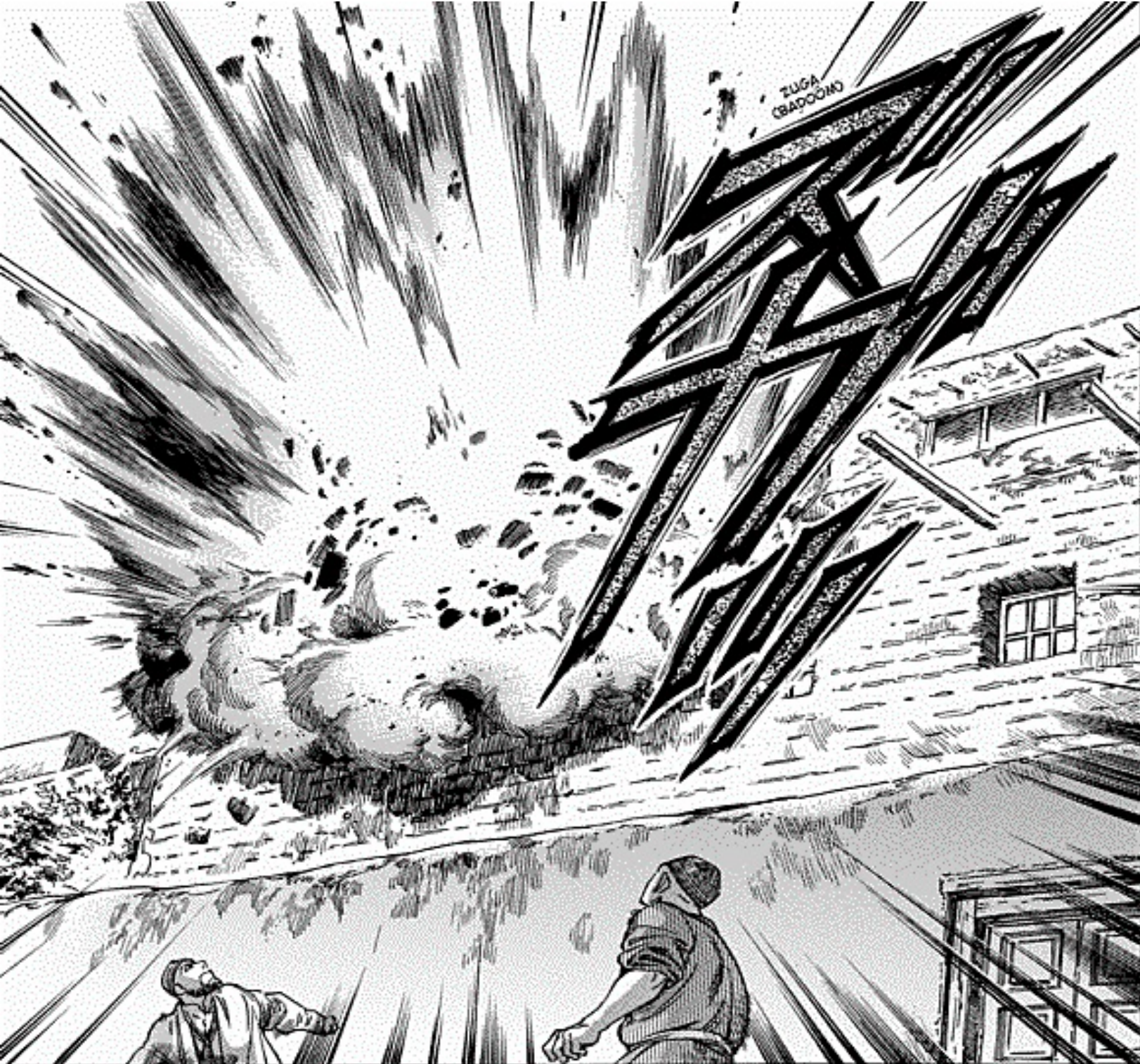
IF THEY
CHARGE WITH
MORE THAN A
HUNDRED HORSE-
MEN, WE WILL
NOT BE ABLE TO
STOP THEM THE
WAY WE DID
BEFORE.

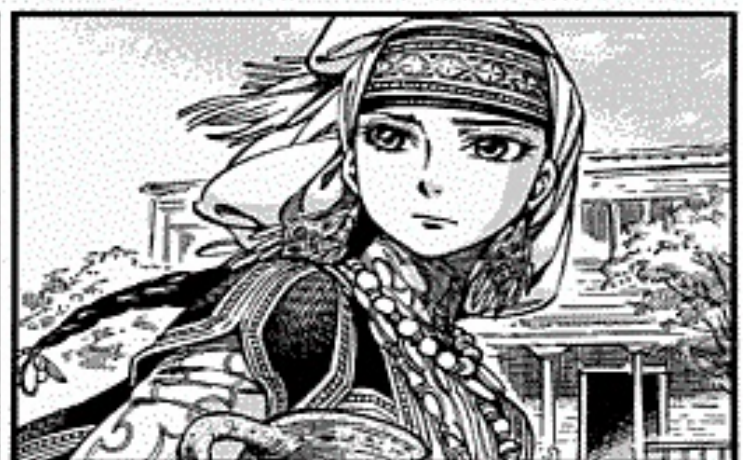


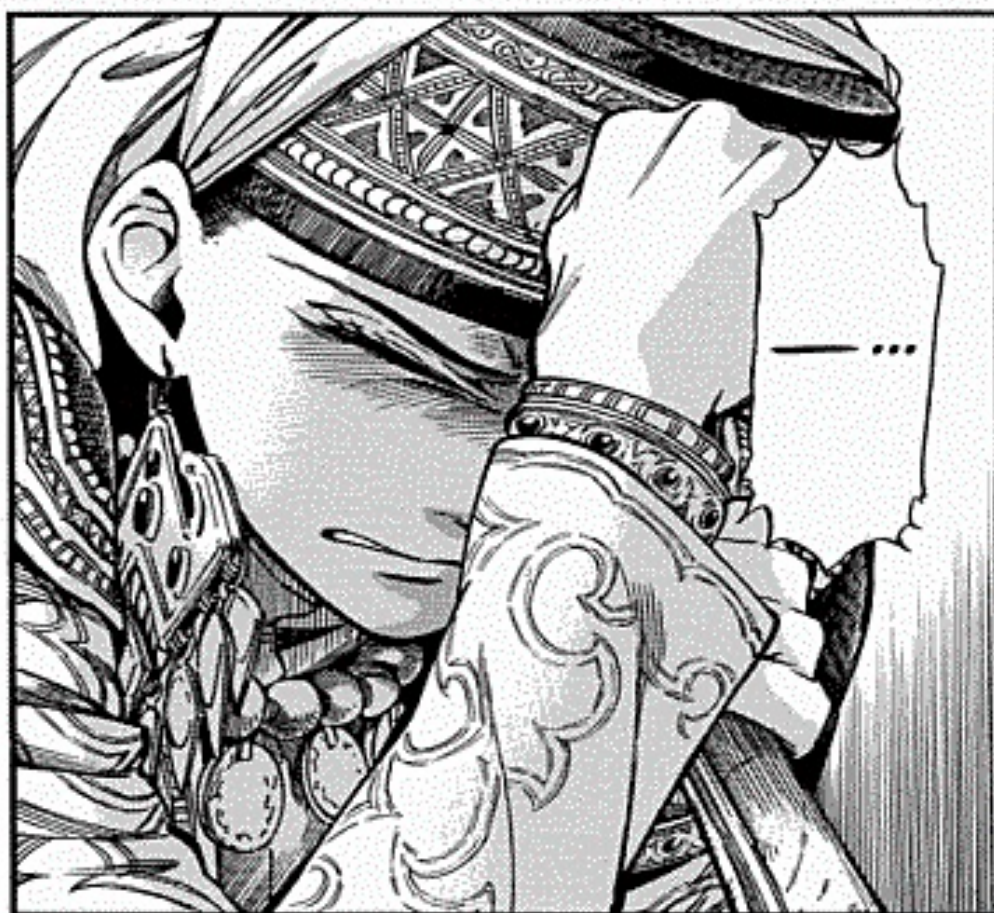
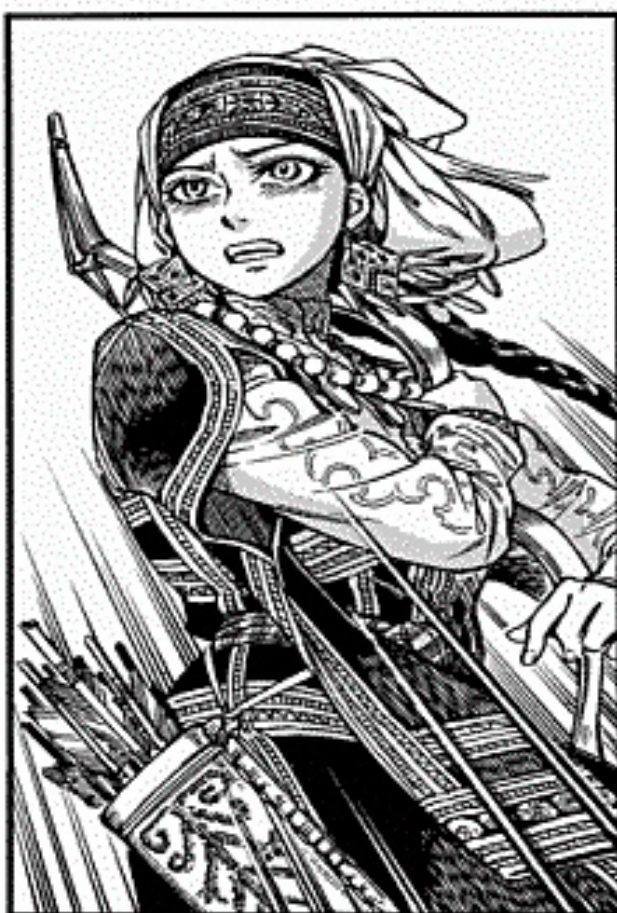
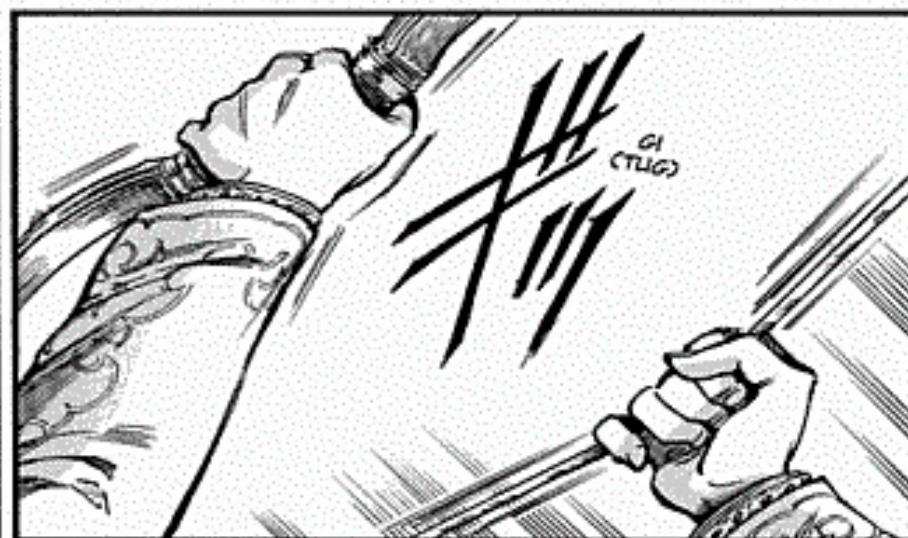
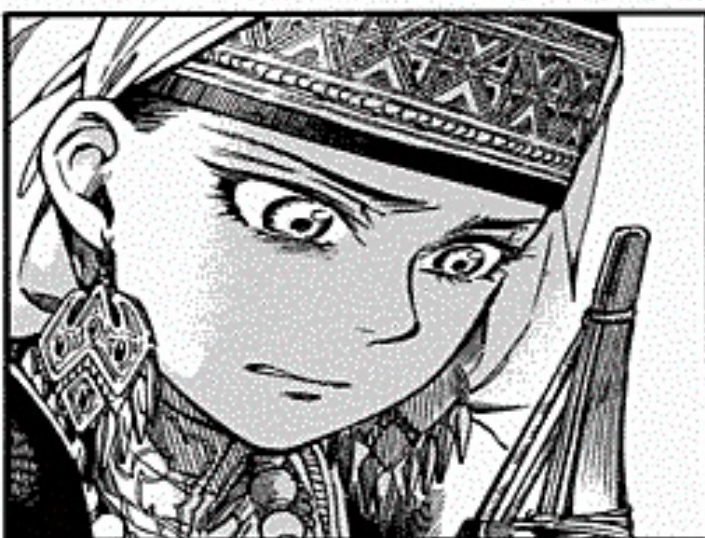
WE
MUST
KEEP
THEIR IN-
TENTIONS
IN MIND
AS WE
PLAN A
DEFENSE.

THEY
AREN'T
AFTER
ME THIS
TIME.

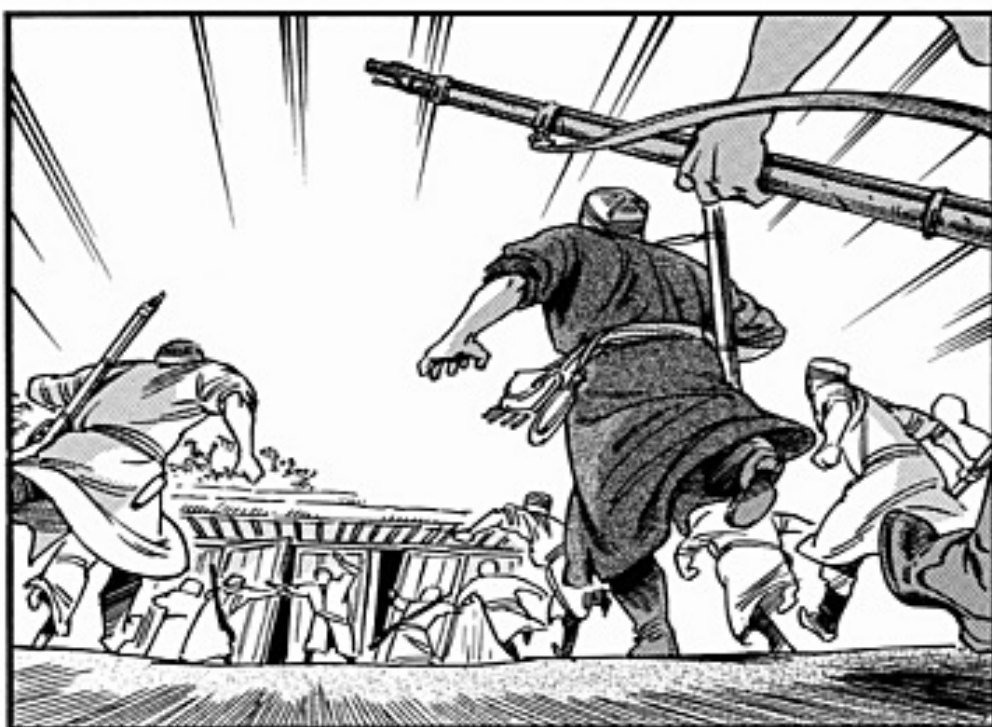
THEY
MEAN TO
RAZE THIS
TOWN
TO THE
GROUND.

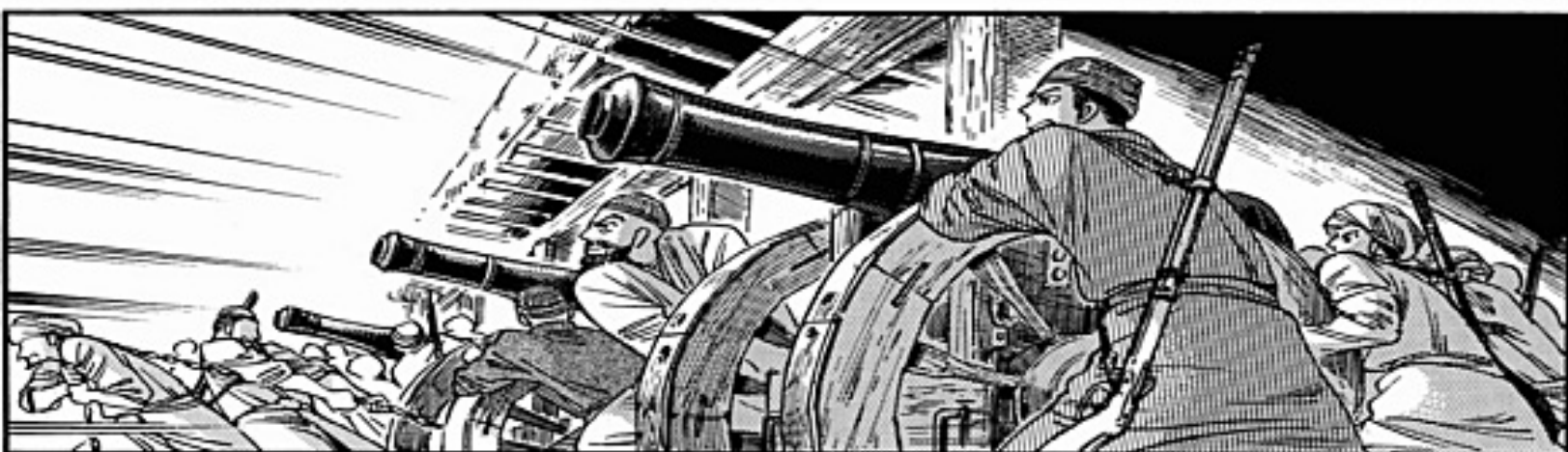
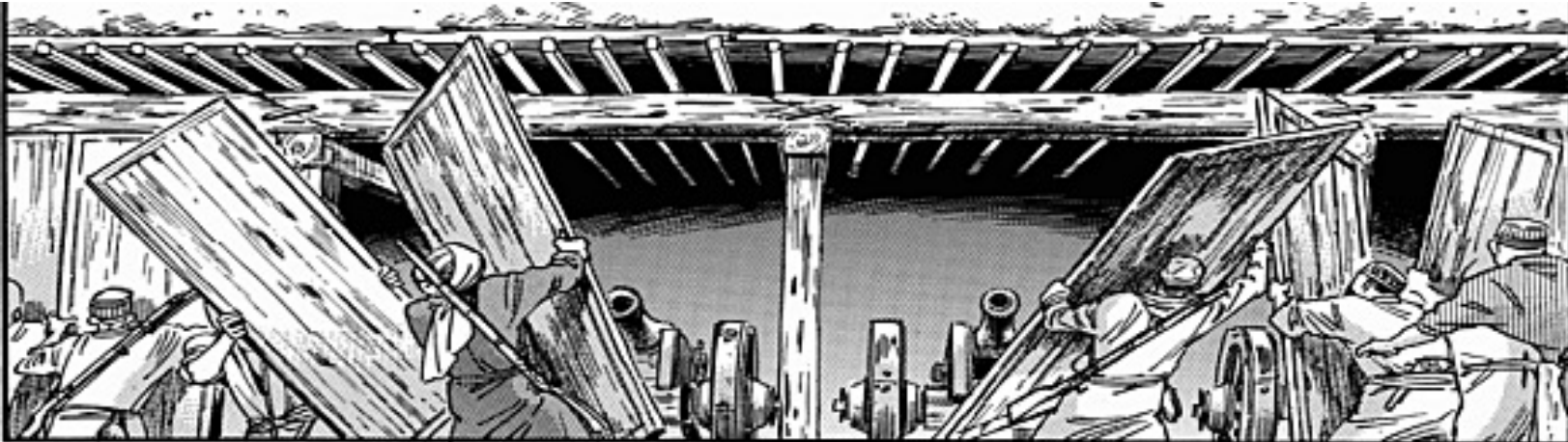


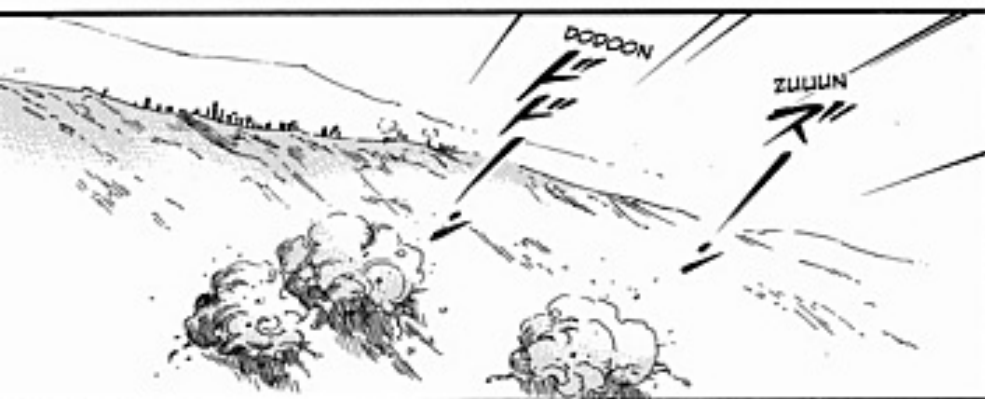
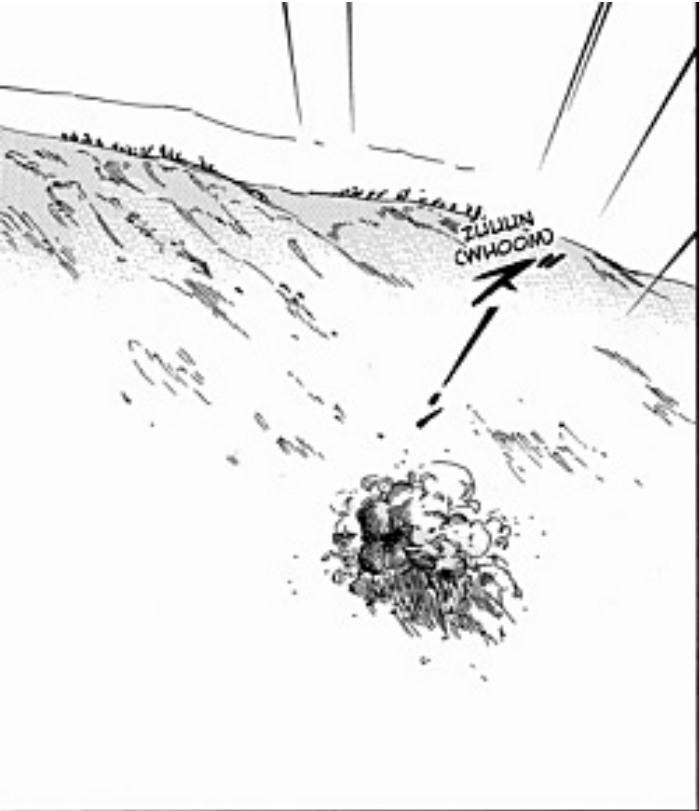
















GAH!

DOH
CYWHOOO



YOU
GOTTA
BE
KIDDING
ME!

THEY
CAN'T
REACH
THE TOP
OF THE
RISE!

WHAT
ABOUT
OUR
CAN-
NONS?



DAMN
THOSE
PEOPLE
!!



DON'T
GET
YOUR-
SELF
HIT!

RE-
TREAT!
RE-
TREAT!

DON
CBOOM



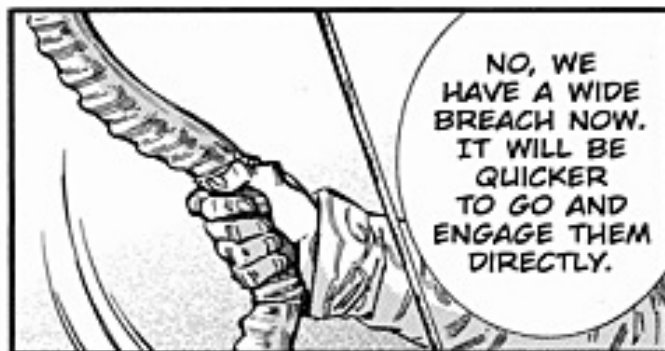


WE'LL
TAKE IT
FROM
HERE.



FROM
WHAT I
CAN SEE,
THE TOWN IS
MORE OR
LESS IN
RUINS.

THAT
SHOULD
DO.



NO, WE
HAVE A WIDE
BREACH NOW.
IT WILL BE
QUICKER
TO GO AND
ENGAGE THEM
DIRECTLY.



SHOULDN'T
WE DO THE
THING
THOROUGHLY
AND KEEP AT
THEM WITH
THE CANNONS
A LITTLE
LONGER?



LET'S
GO!

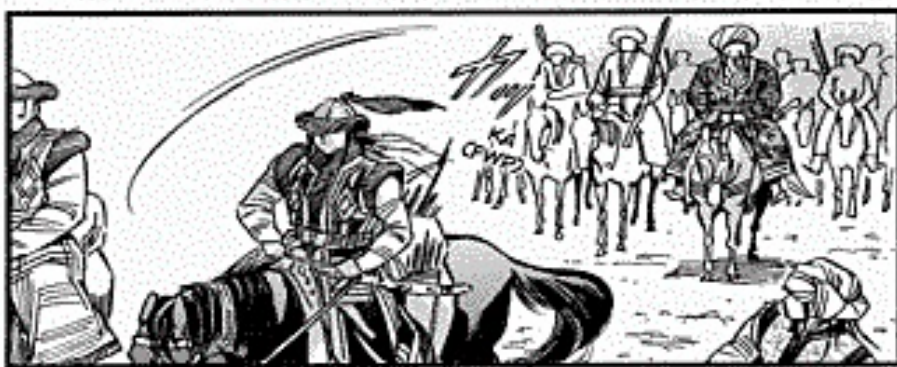
YEAH!



MOST
LIKELY THEY
RETRATED
FARTHER
BACK TO
AVOID THE
CANNONS.

WE MUST
ROUTE
THEM NOW
BEFORE
THEY CAN
REGROUP.



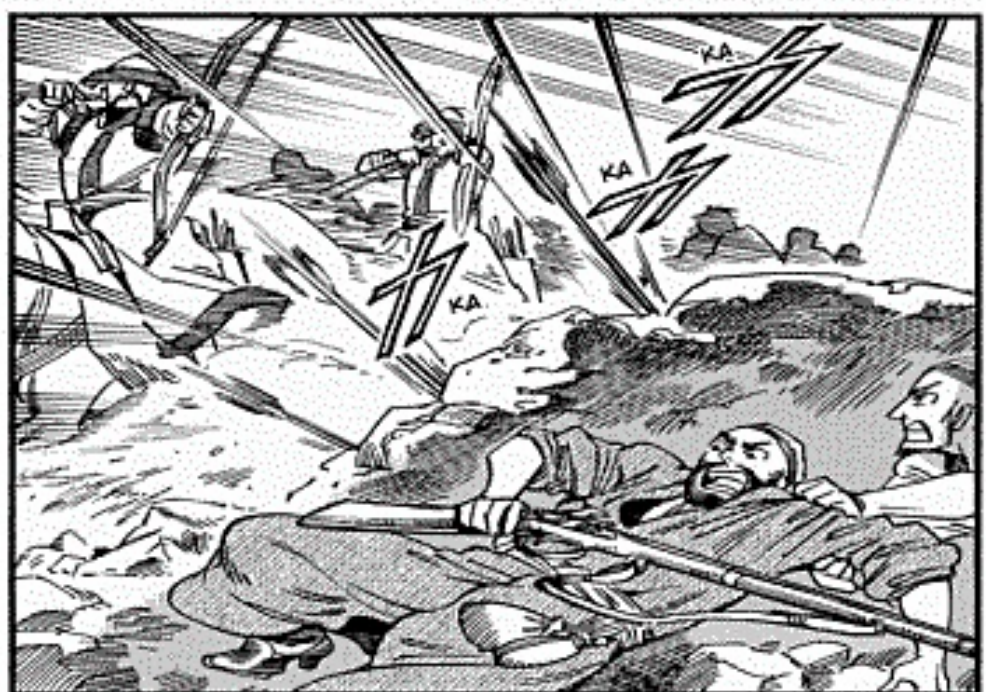
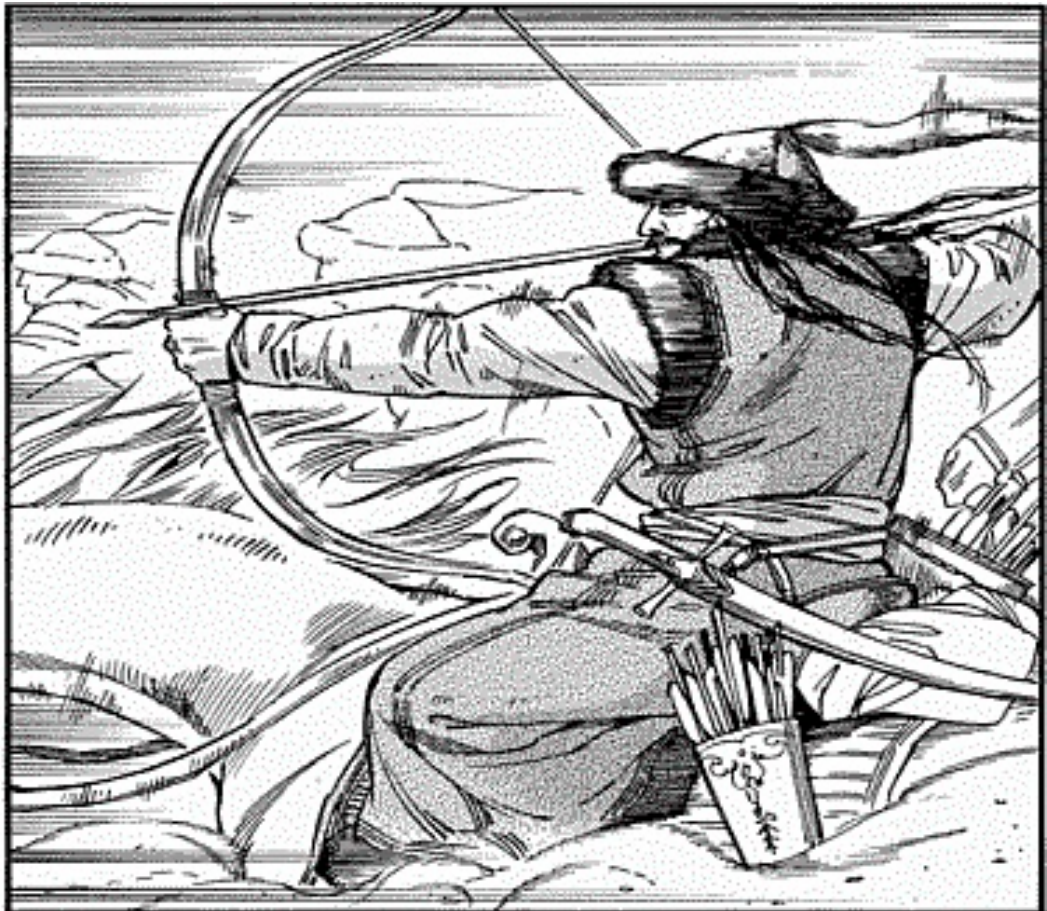


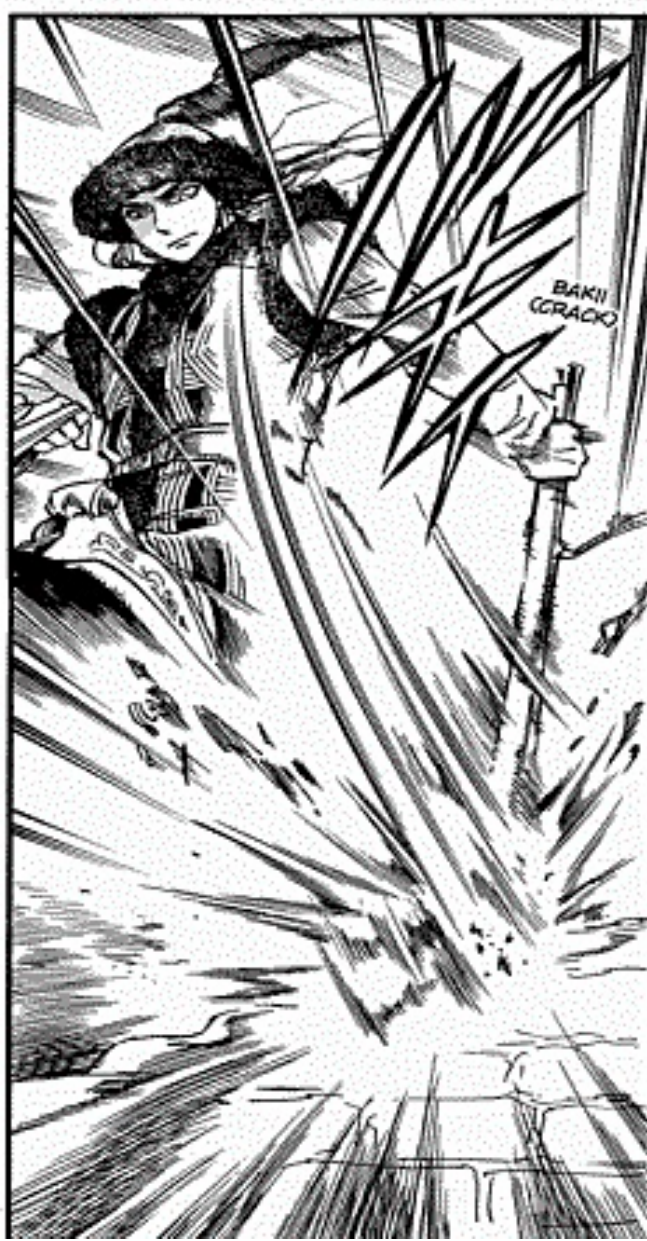
◆
CHAPTER 32
CAVALRY
CHARGE
◆

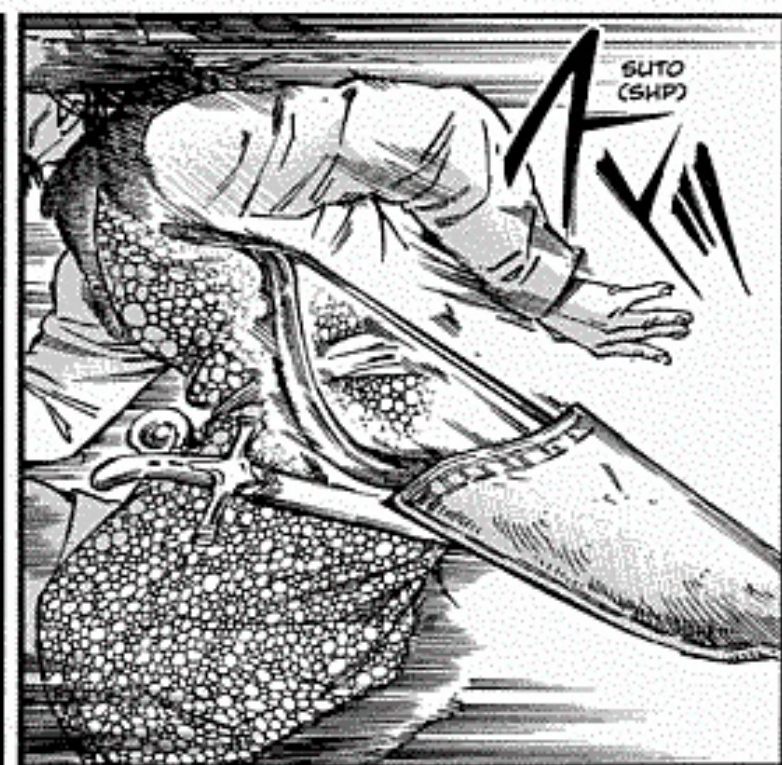
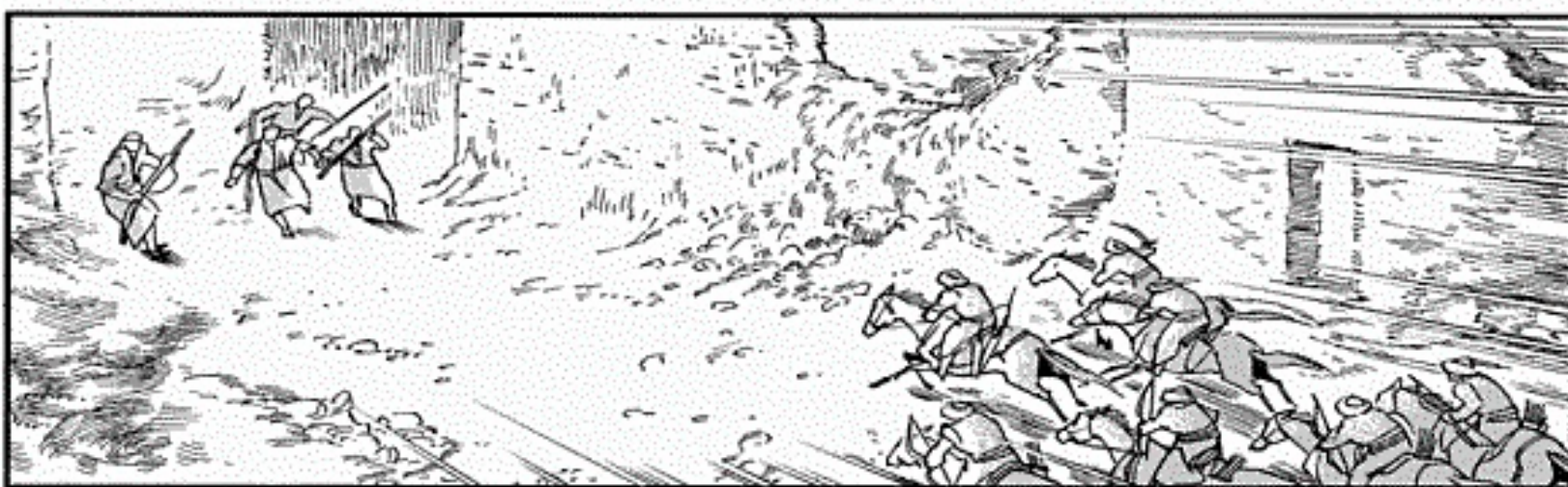




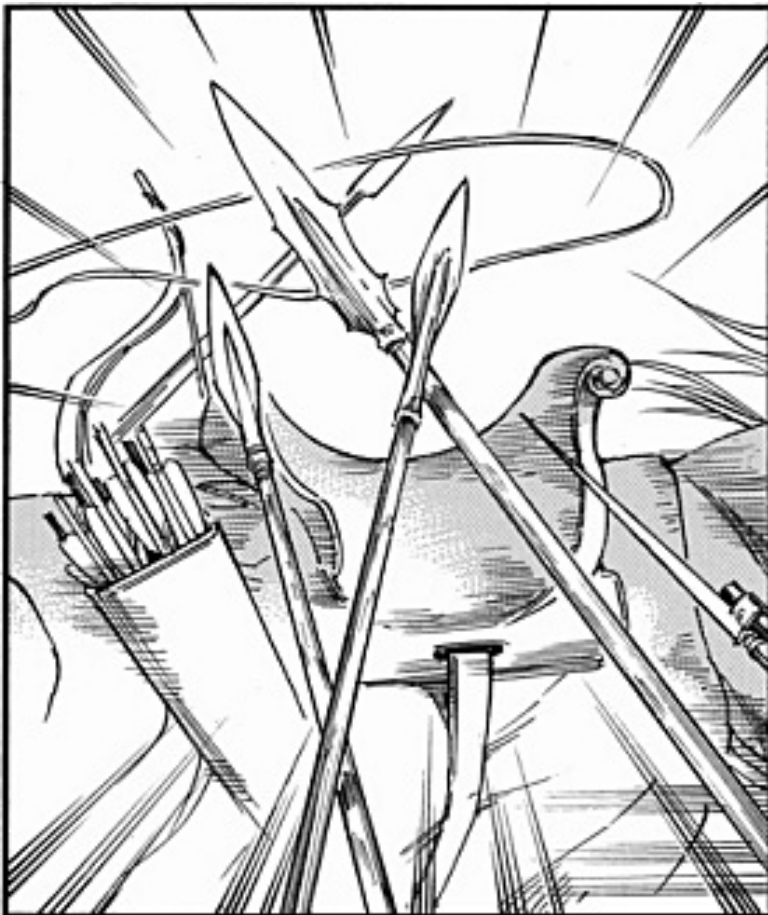




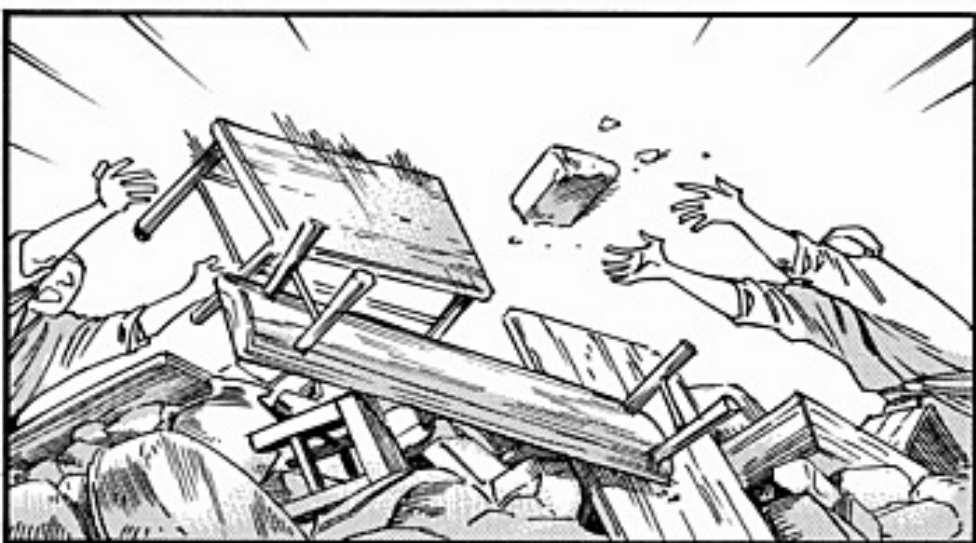


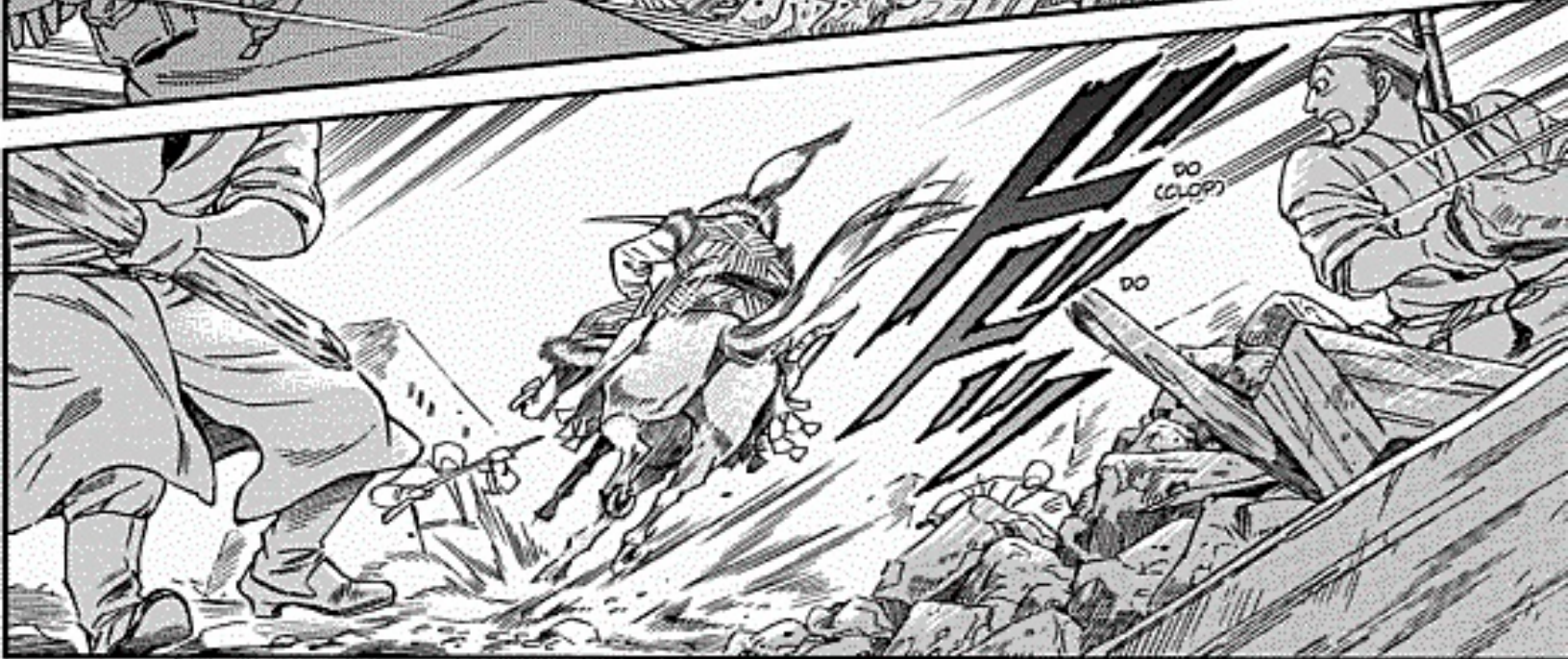
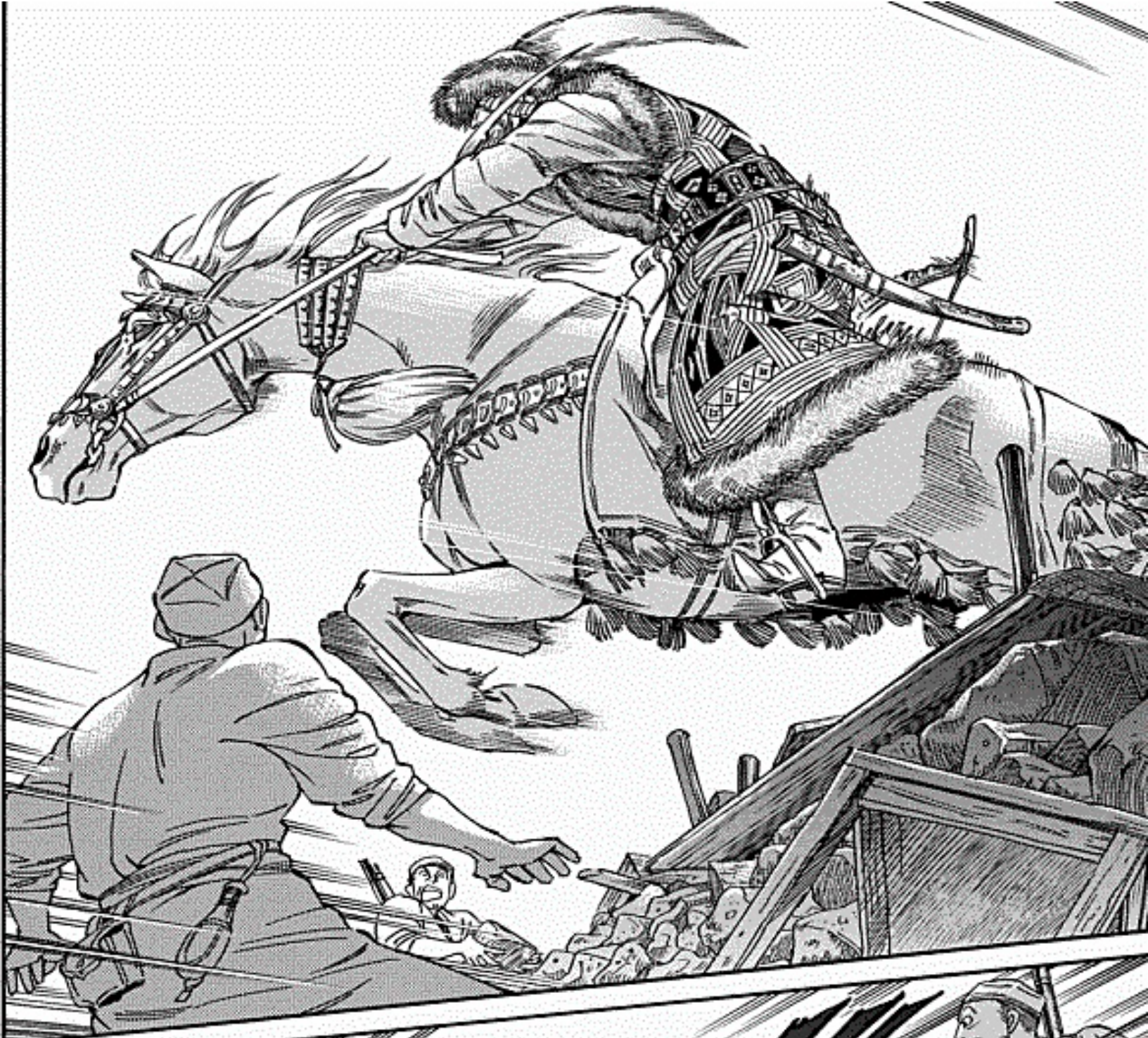










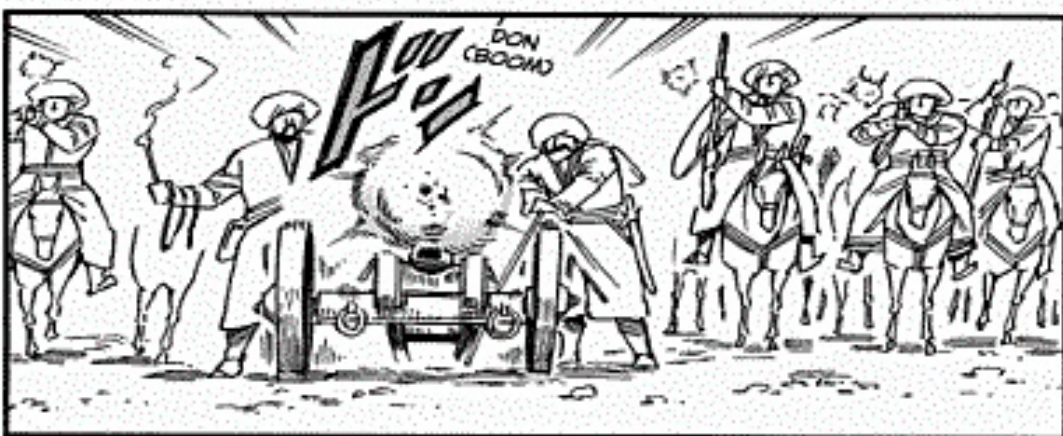


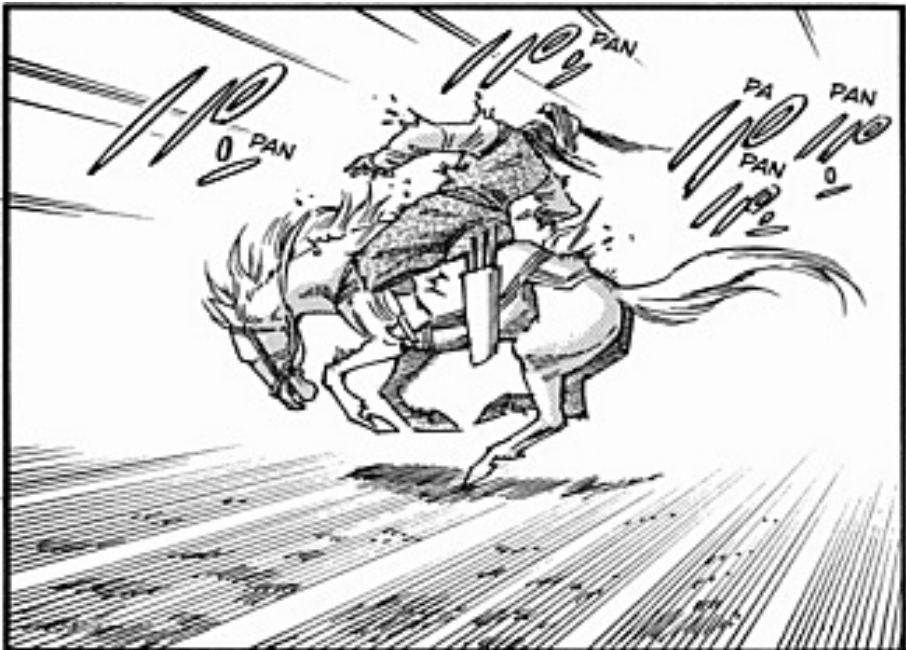




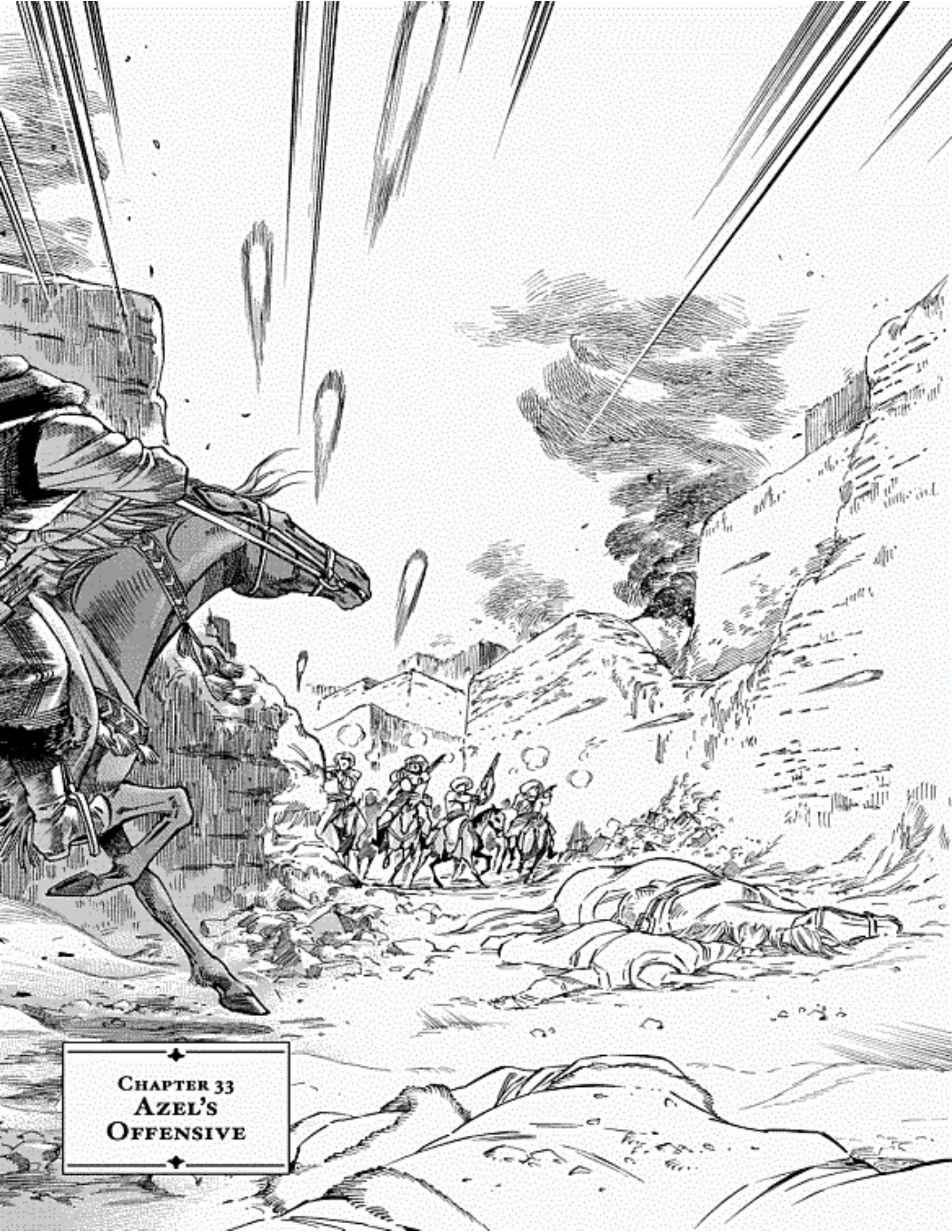






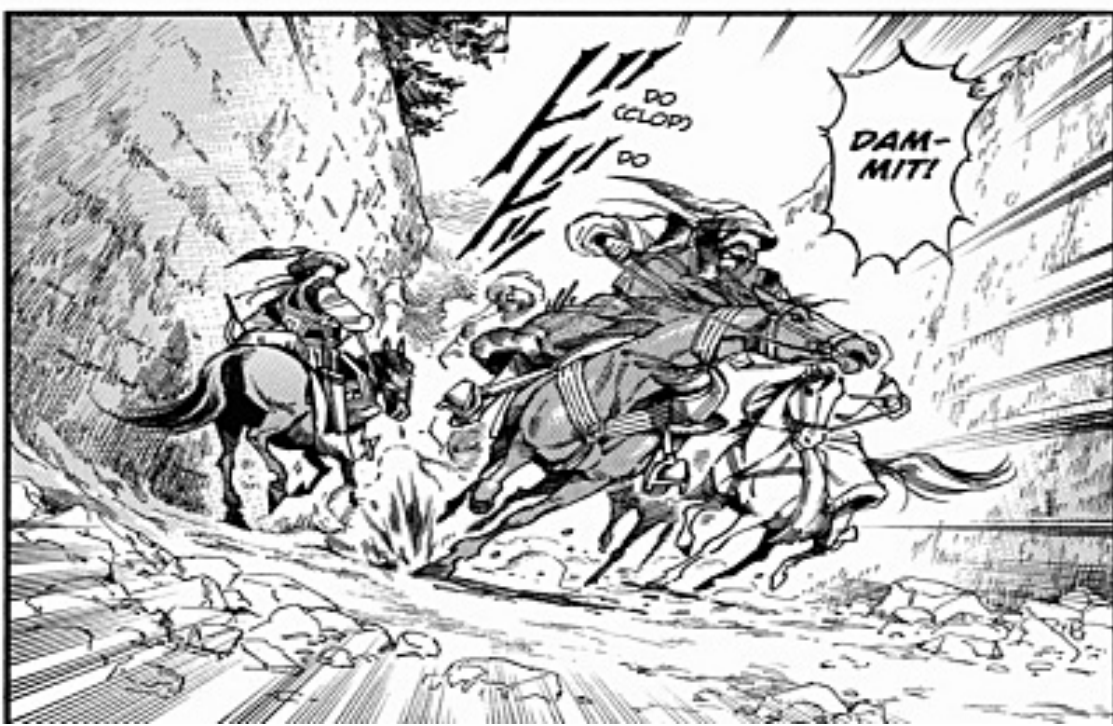






◆
CHAPTER 33
AZEL'S
OFFENSIVE
◆







I'LL STAY
HERE AND
MAKE
SURE...

...NO
BADAN
SURVIVES
THIS!



JORUK!
BAIMAT!

GO MAKE
FATHER
RETREAT
TOO!

IF HE
WON'T,
THEN
CONVINCE
WHATEVER
ELDERS YOU
CAN AND
HEAD BACK
TO CAMP!!



NOW'S
NOT THE
TIME
FOR
THAT!

DON'T
BE A
FOOL,
AZEL!



THEY THINK
THEY'RE THE
PREDATORS
HUNTING
DOWN PREY!

THEY'LL BE
OFF THEIR
GUARDS.

NOW
IS THE
BEST
TIME!!



THEY
PLAN
TO KILL
EVERYONE
HERE!
INCLUDING
US!

BUT THIS
CAN BE
OUR
CHANCE.



HOW MANY
OF OUR
FAMILY
HAVE THEY
SLAUGHTERED!?

YOU
THINK I'LL
LET THAT
STAND!?!?



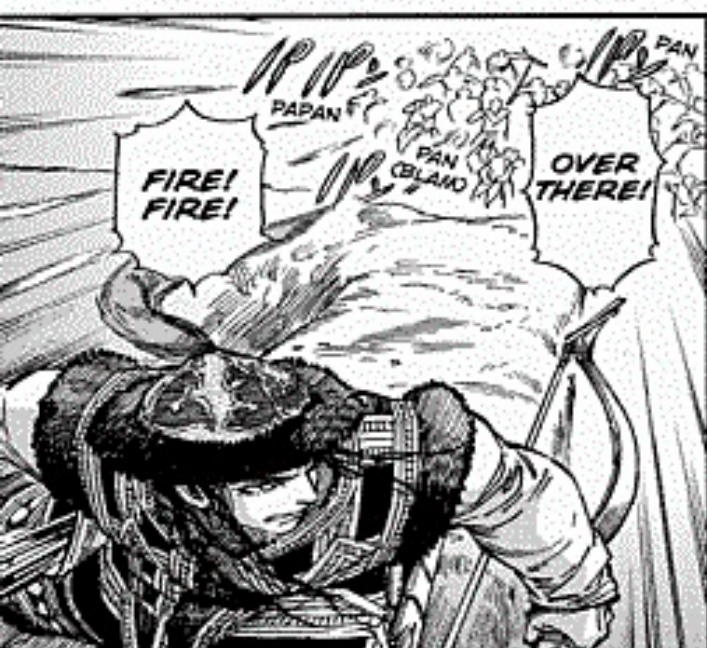
MAYBE,
BUT THINK
OF WHERE
WE ARE!

CHASE
THEM TOO
FAR, AND
YOU'LL
END UP
DEAD!!

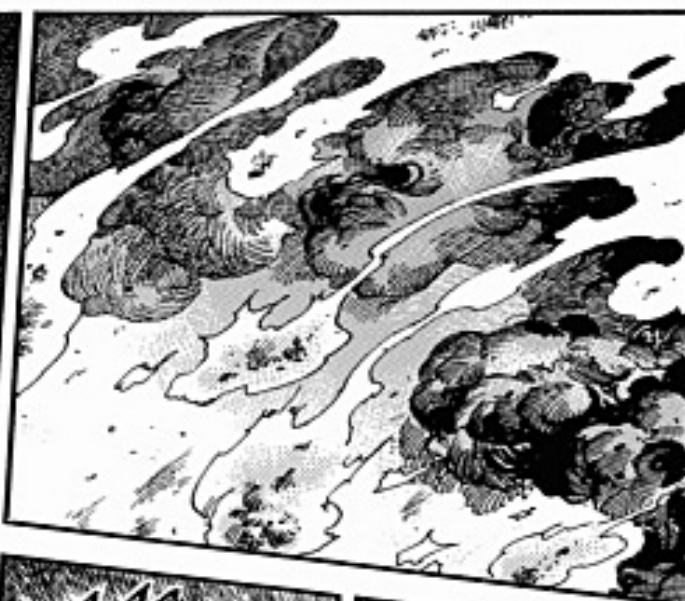




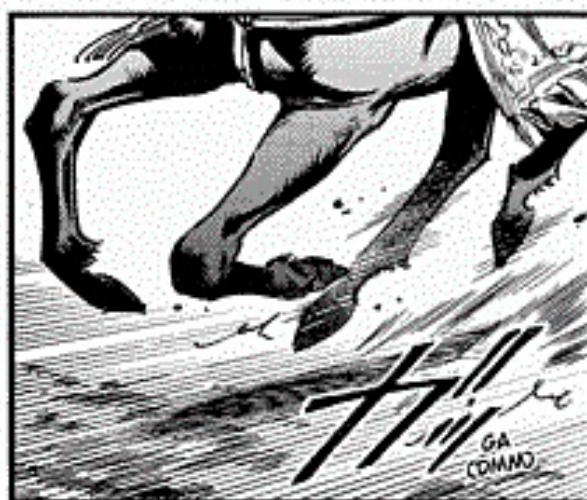
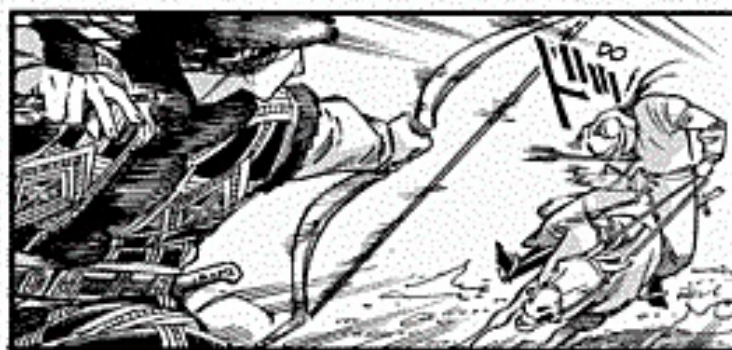
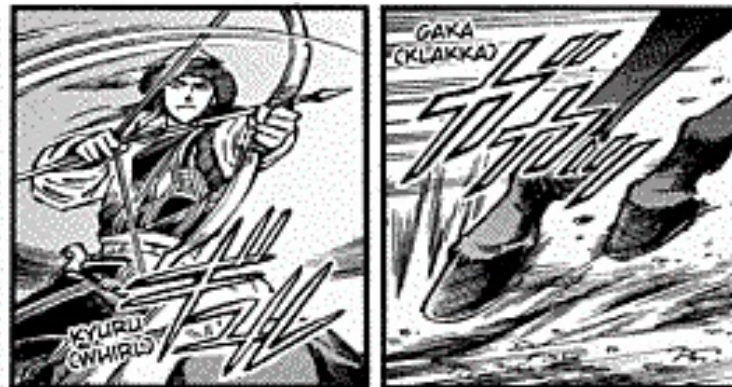






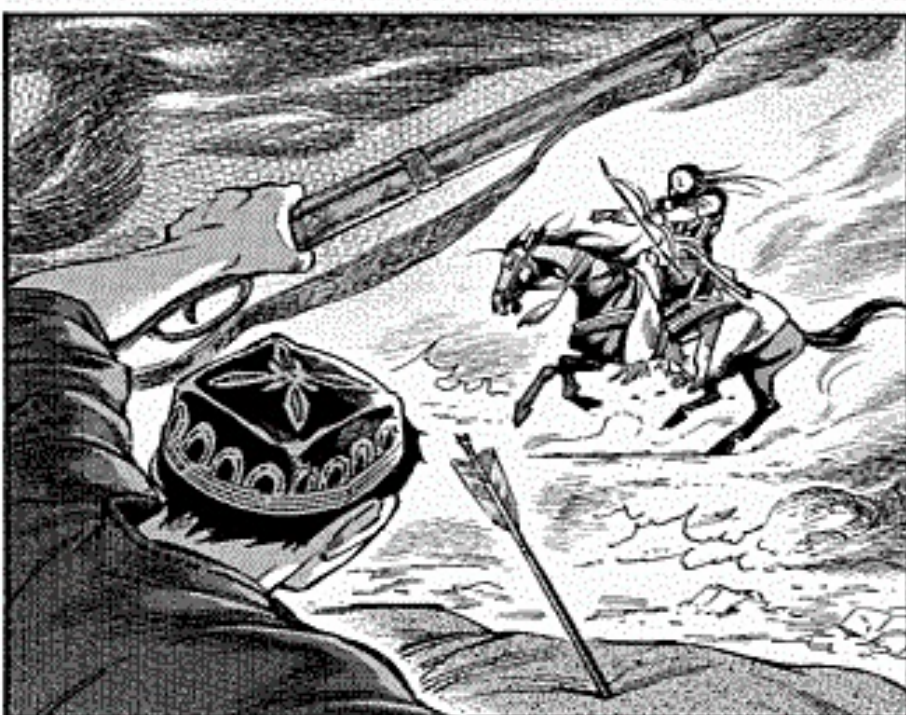
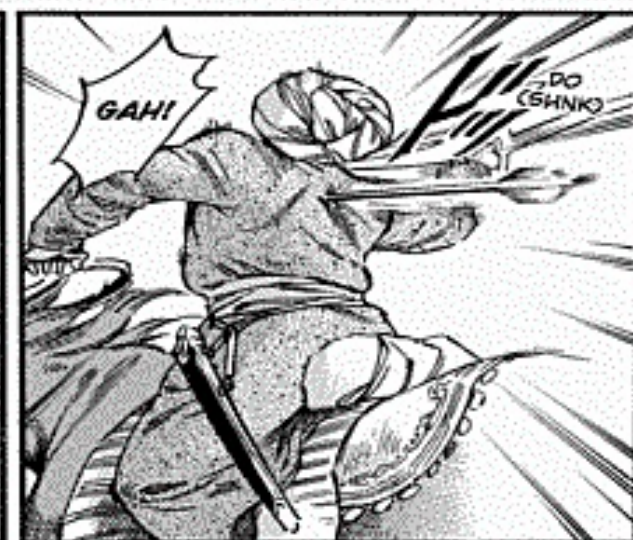


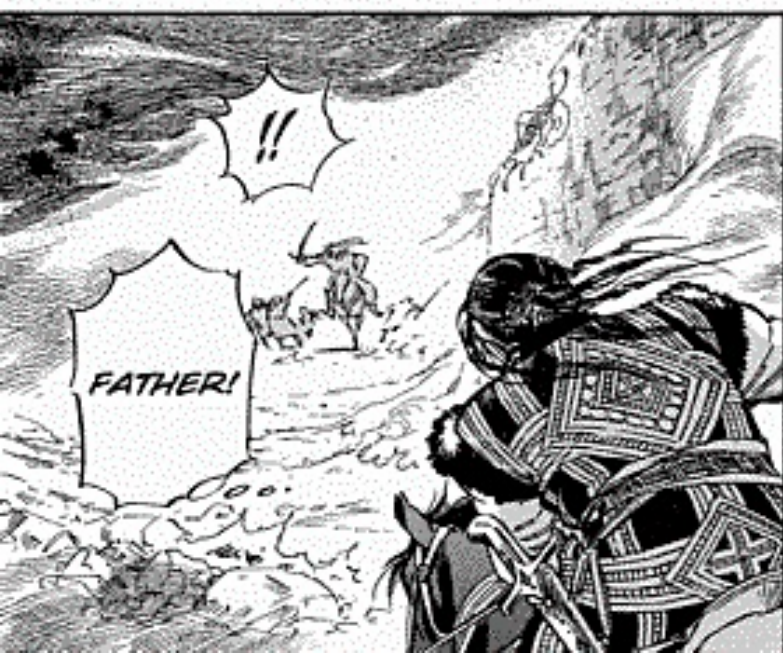




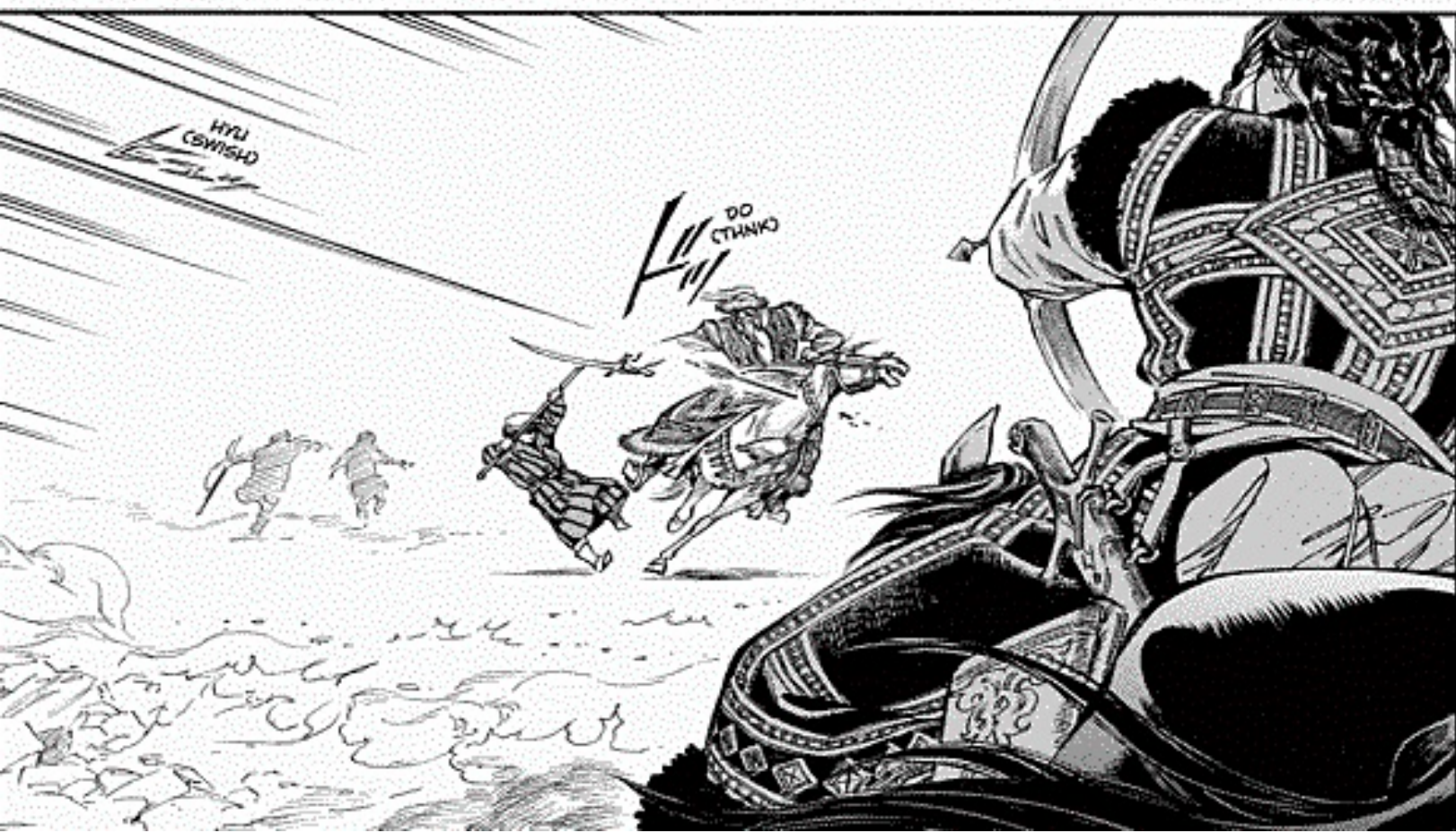
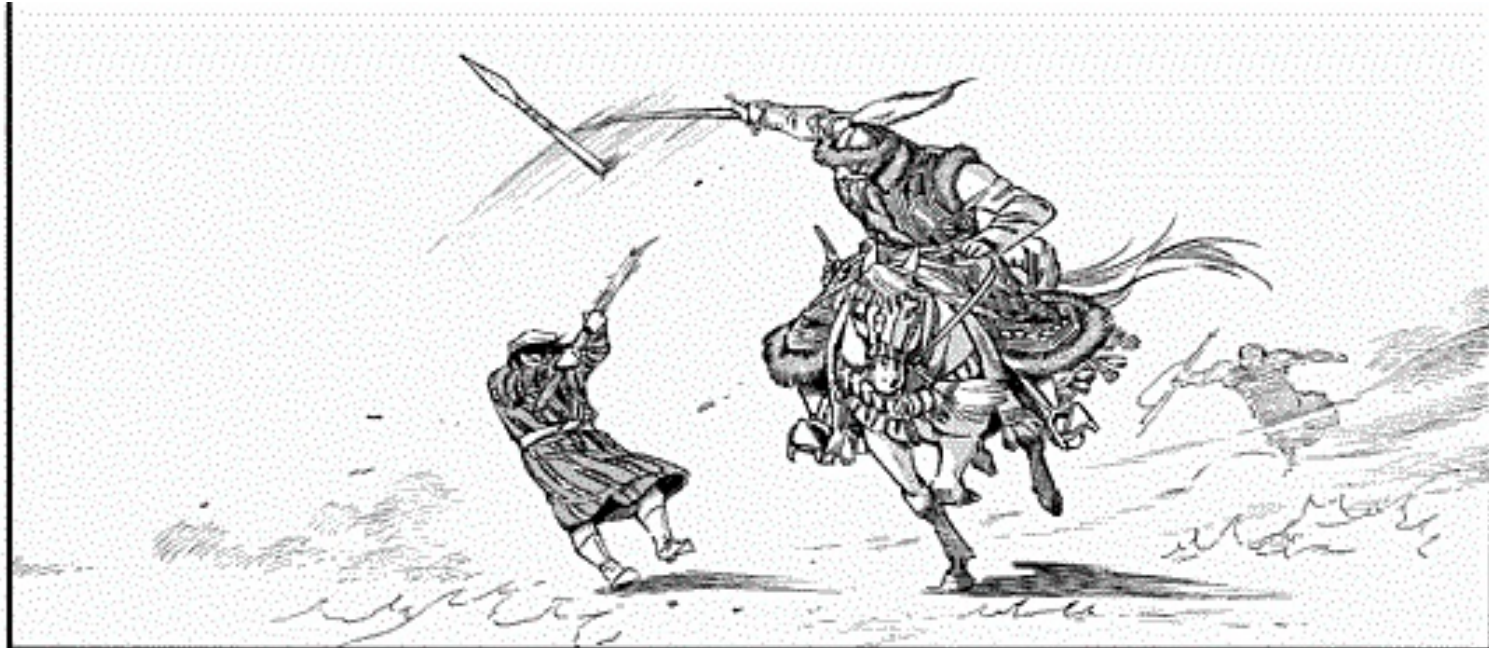


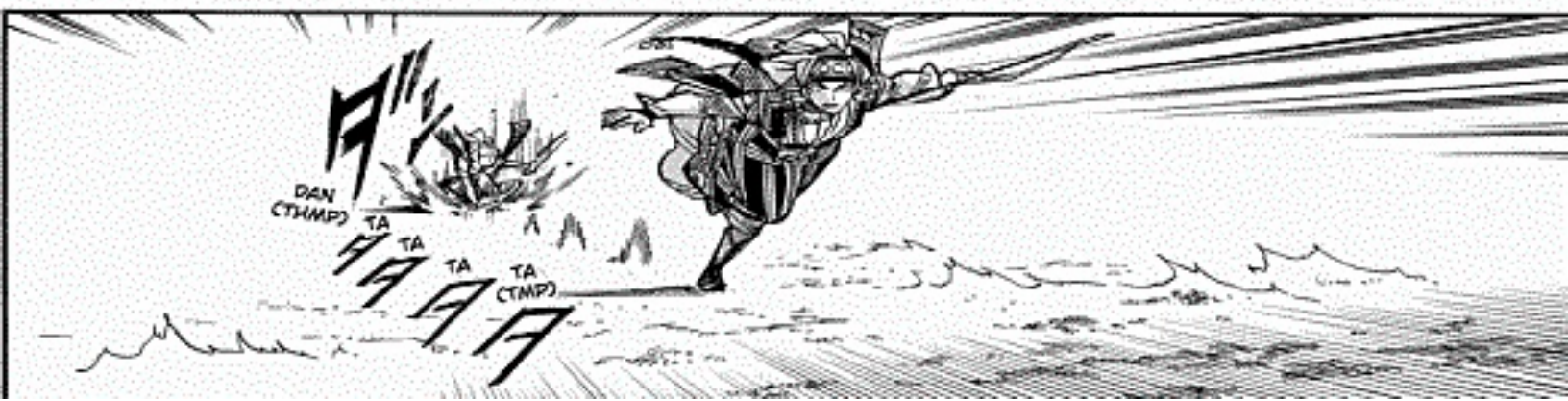
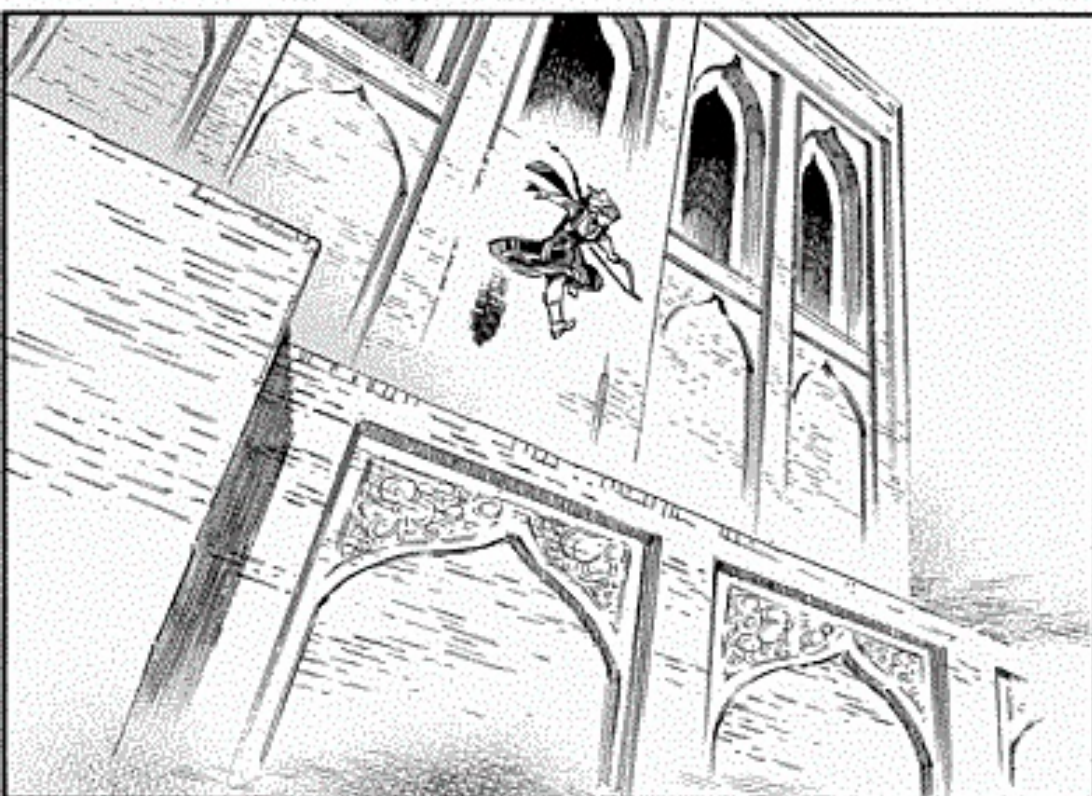


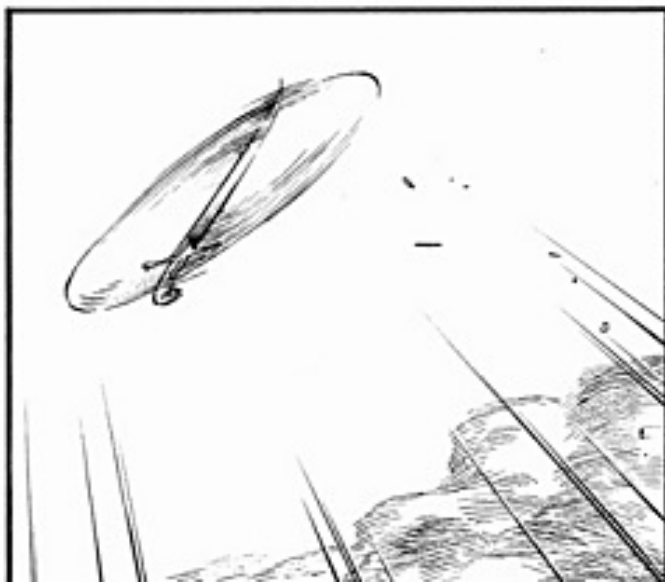
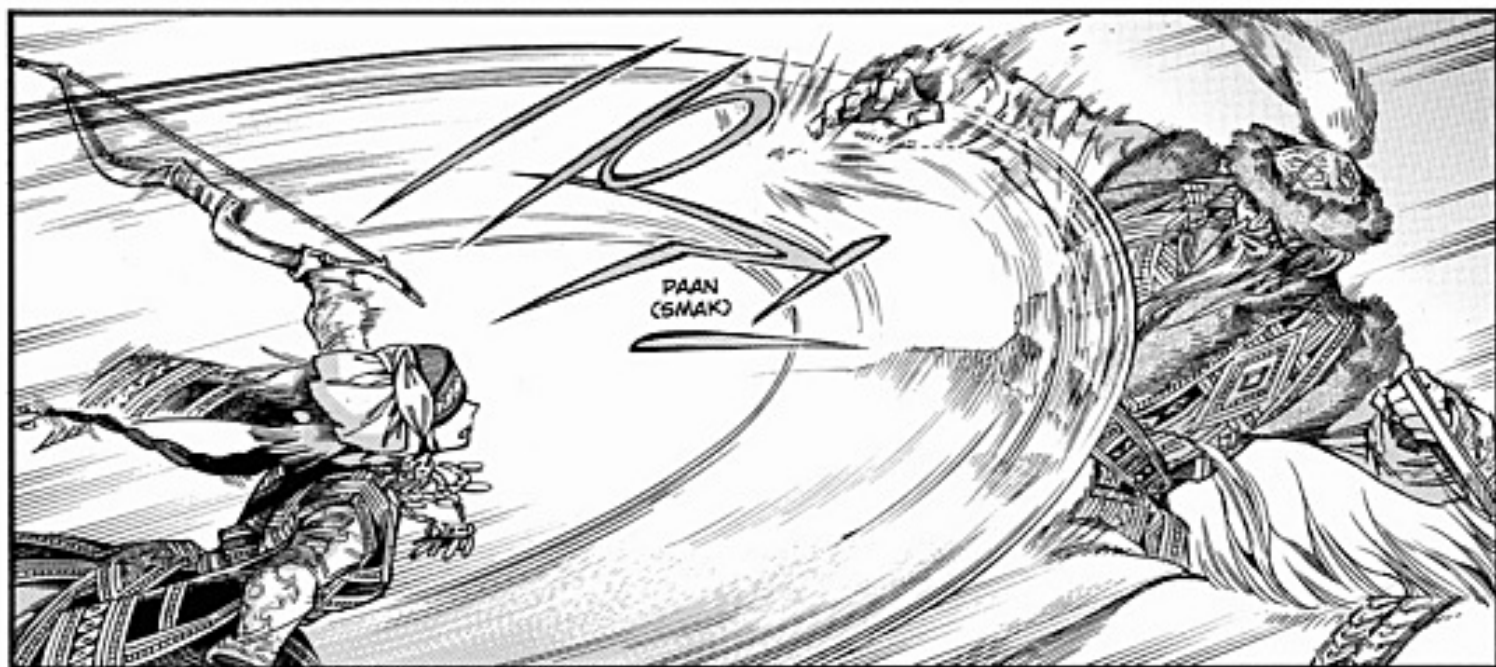


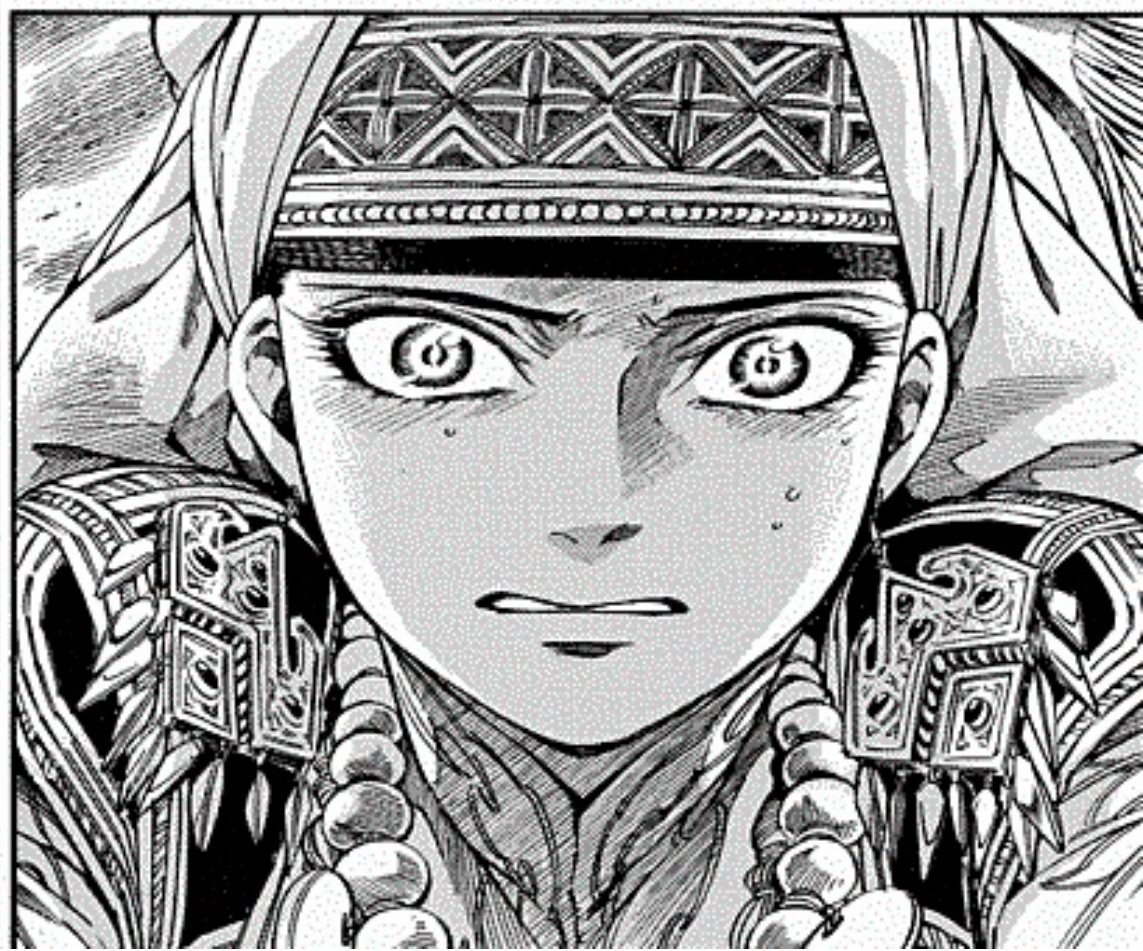
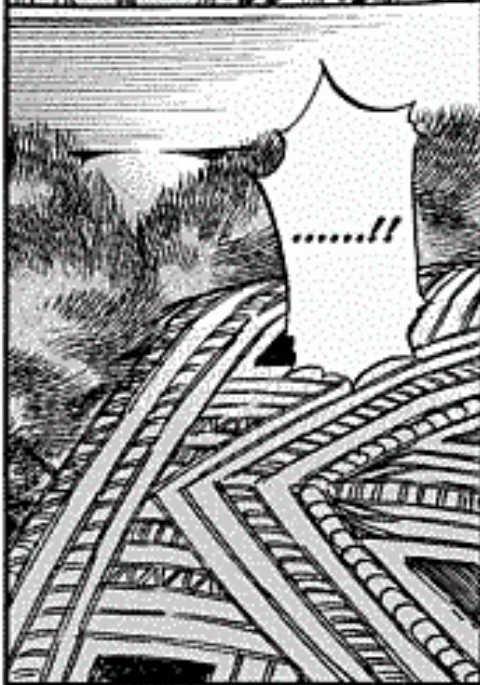
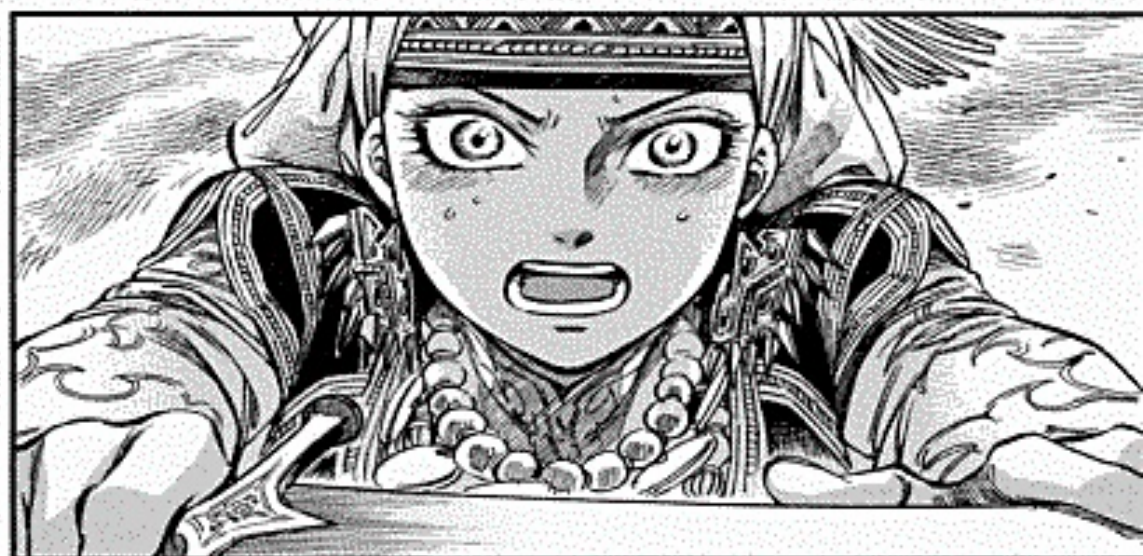


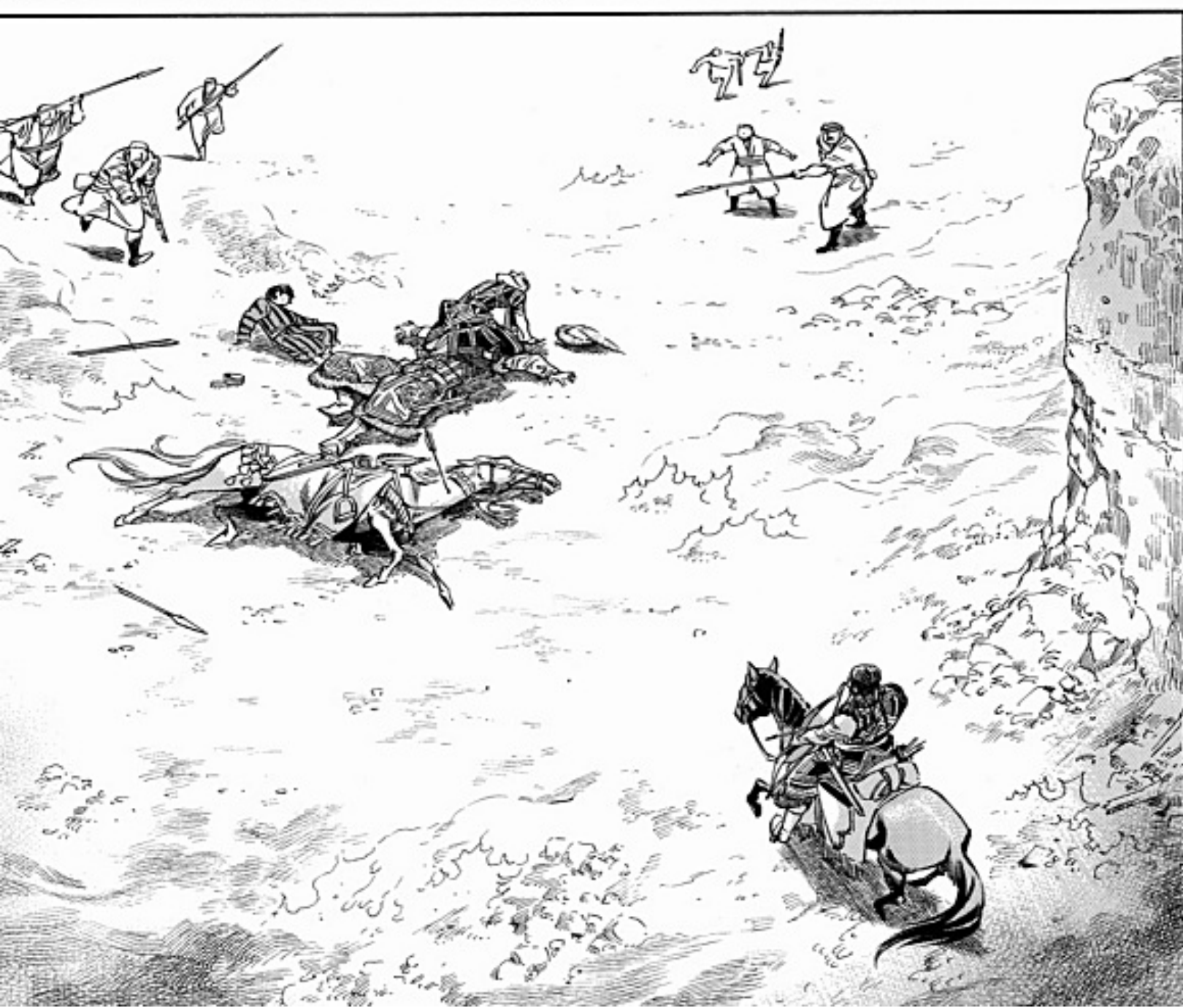




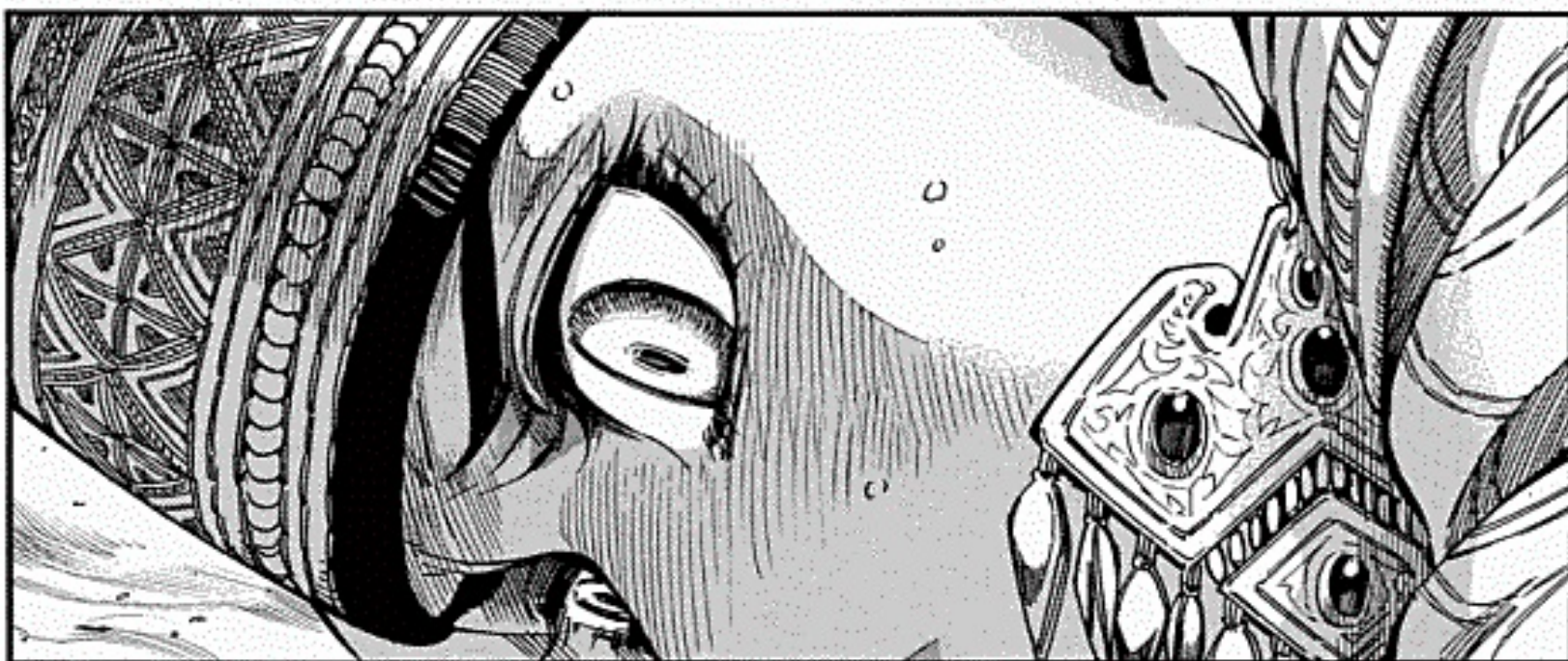
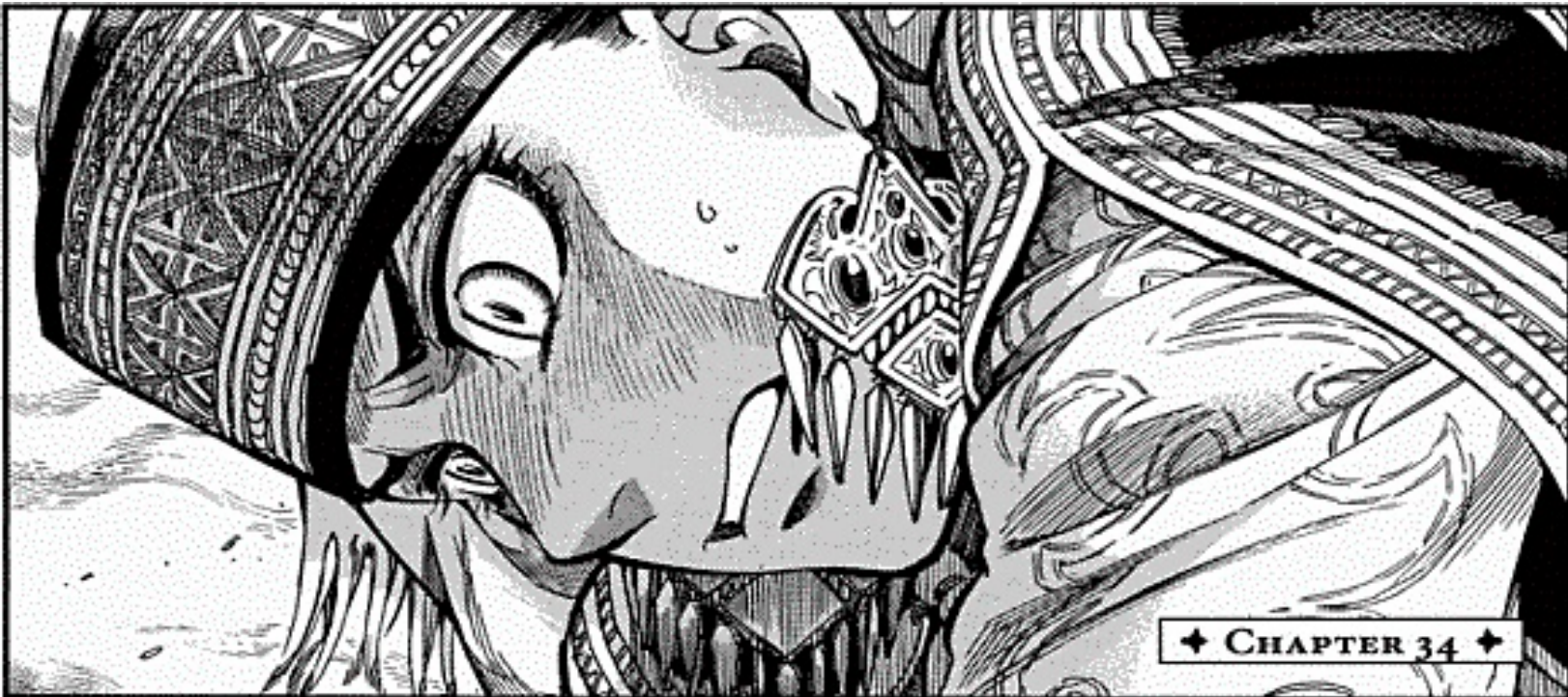












CHAPTER 34
SHIELDING YOU
FROM BEHIND



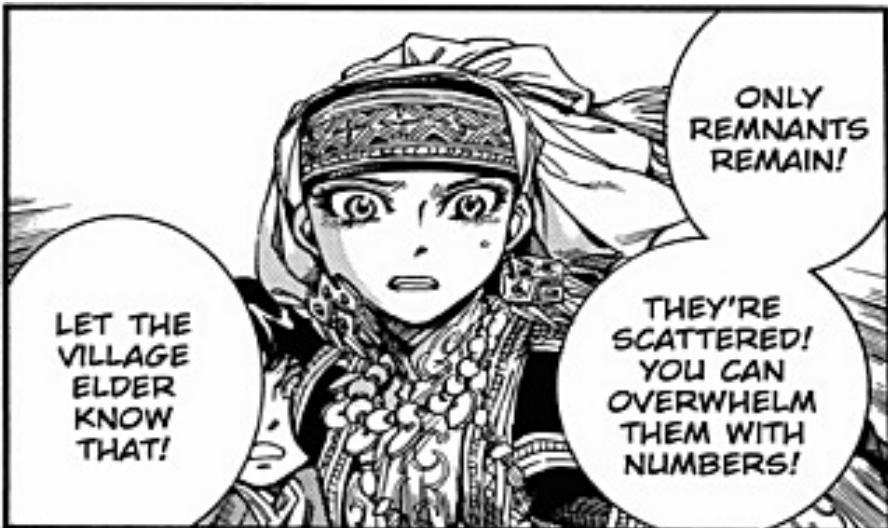


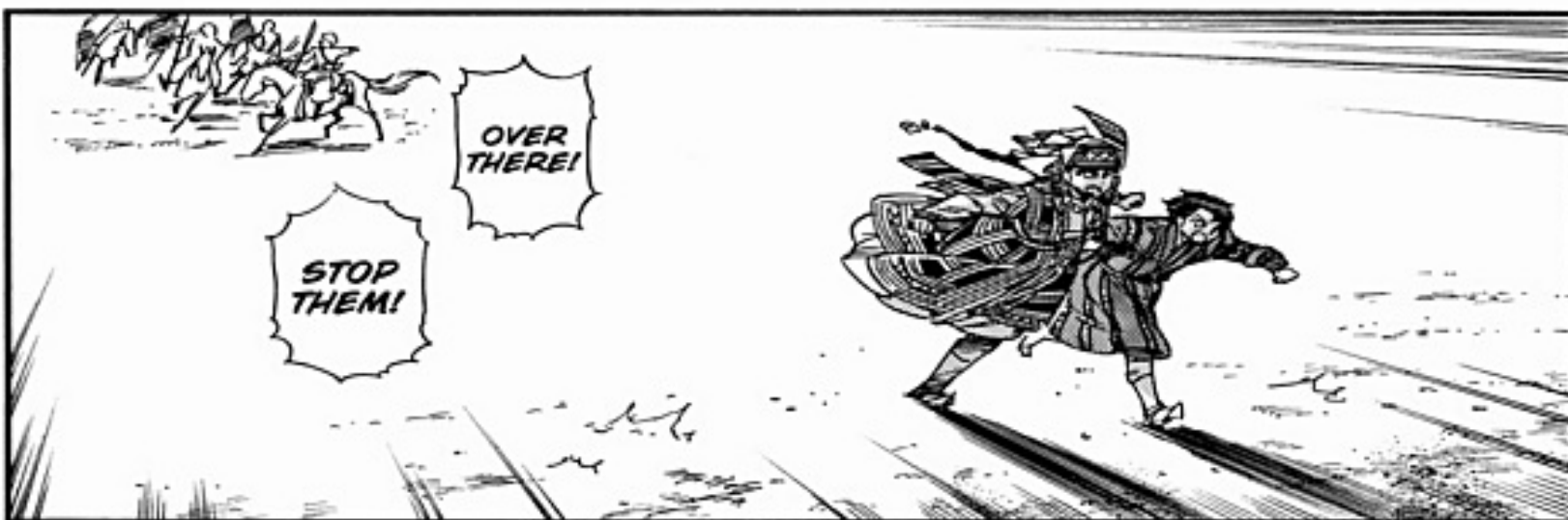


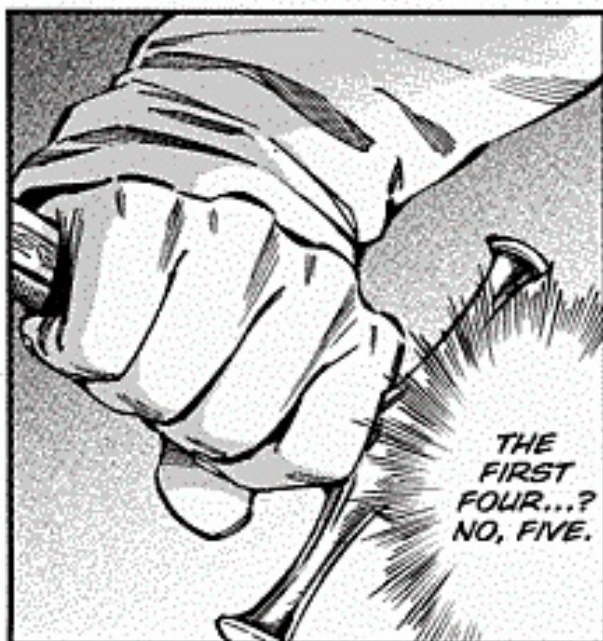
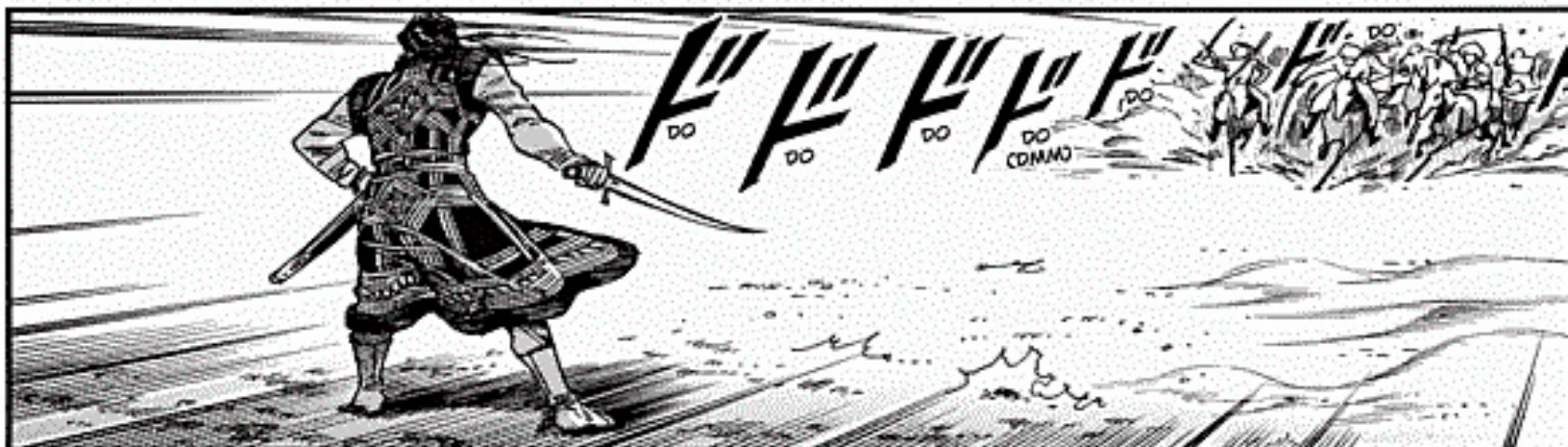
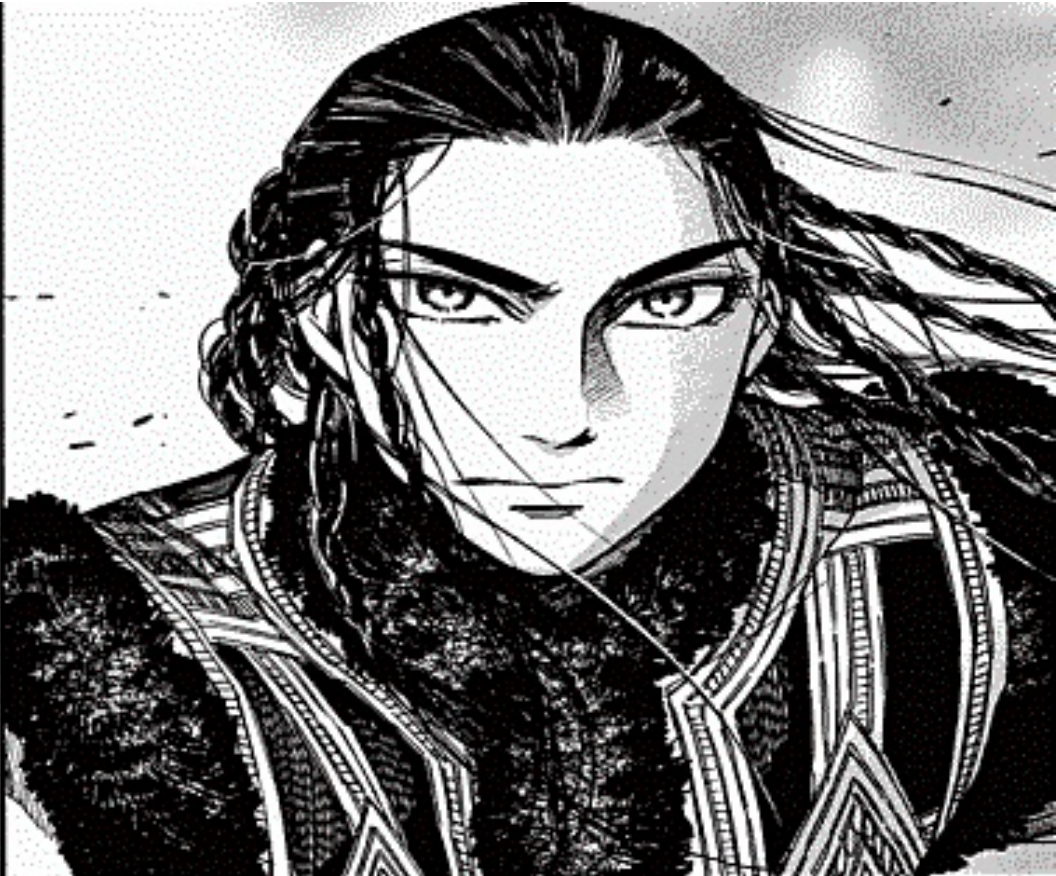




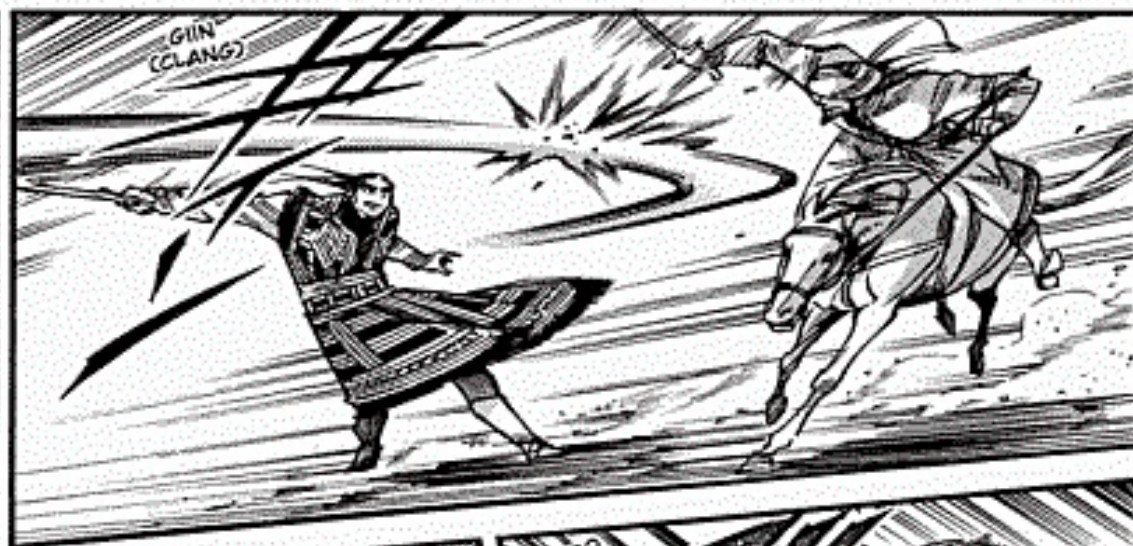




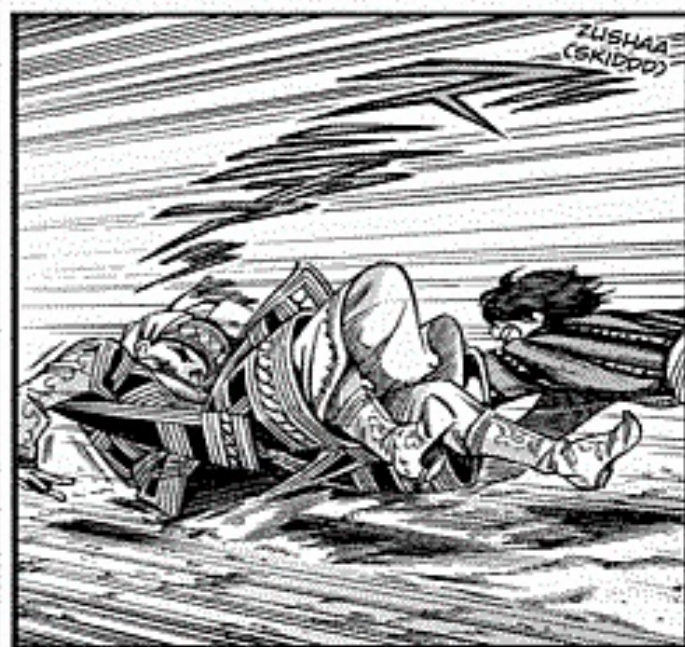
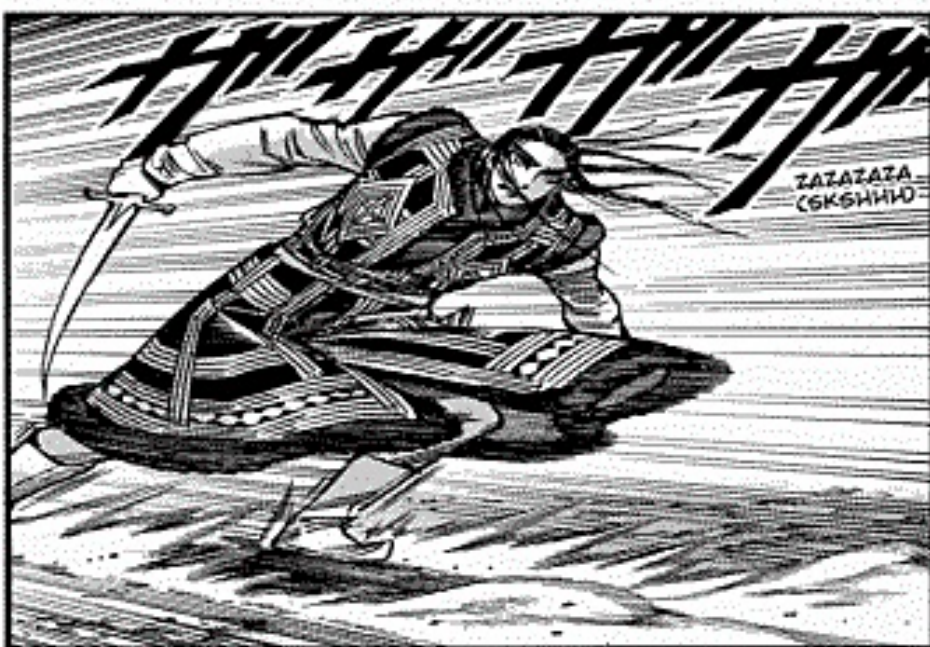
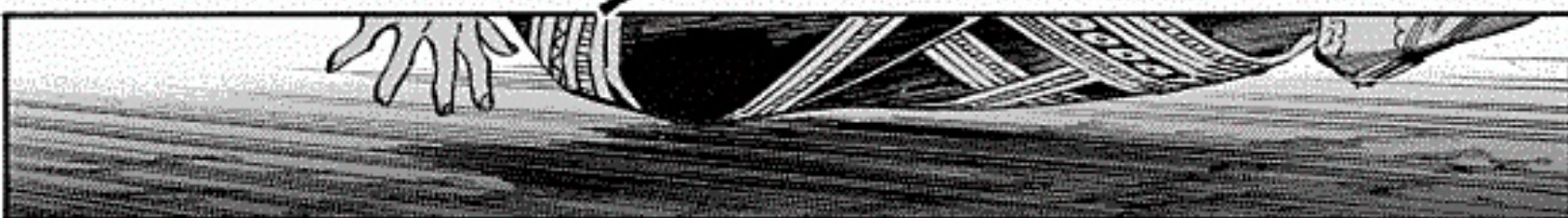
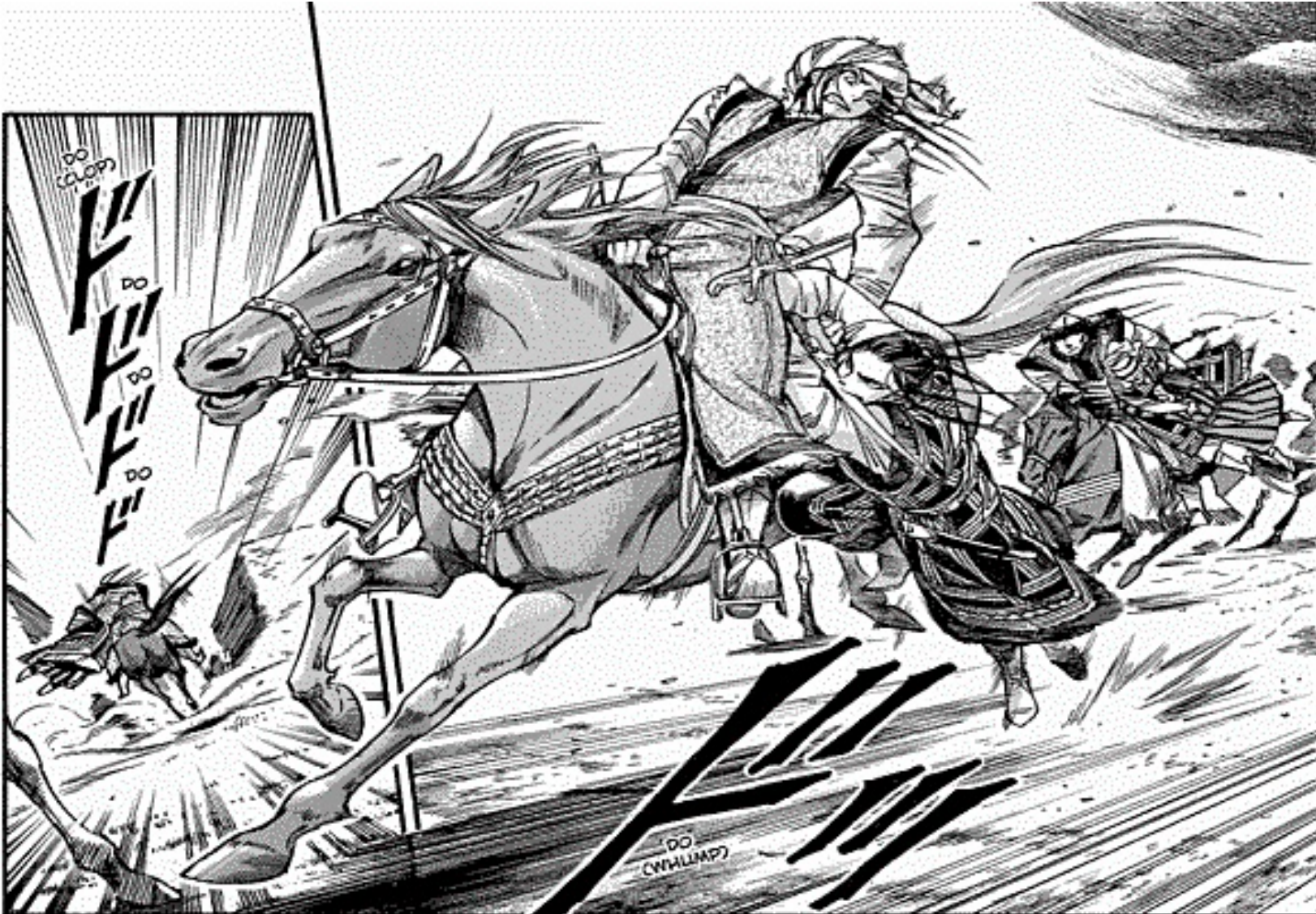




AND
WHEN I
CAN'T TAKE
ANY MORE,
THEN
THAT WILL
BE—!!



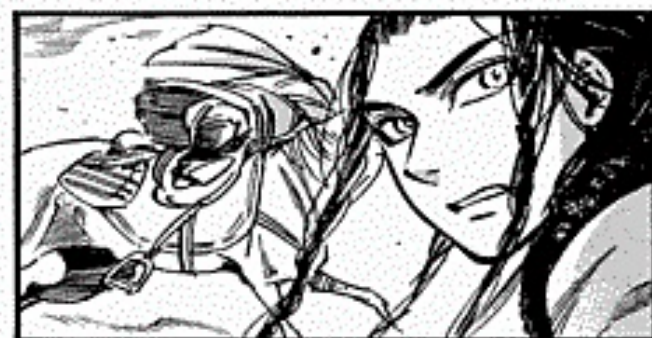
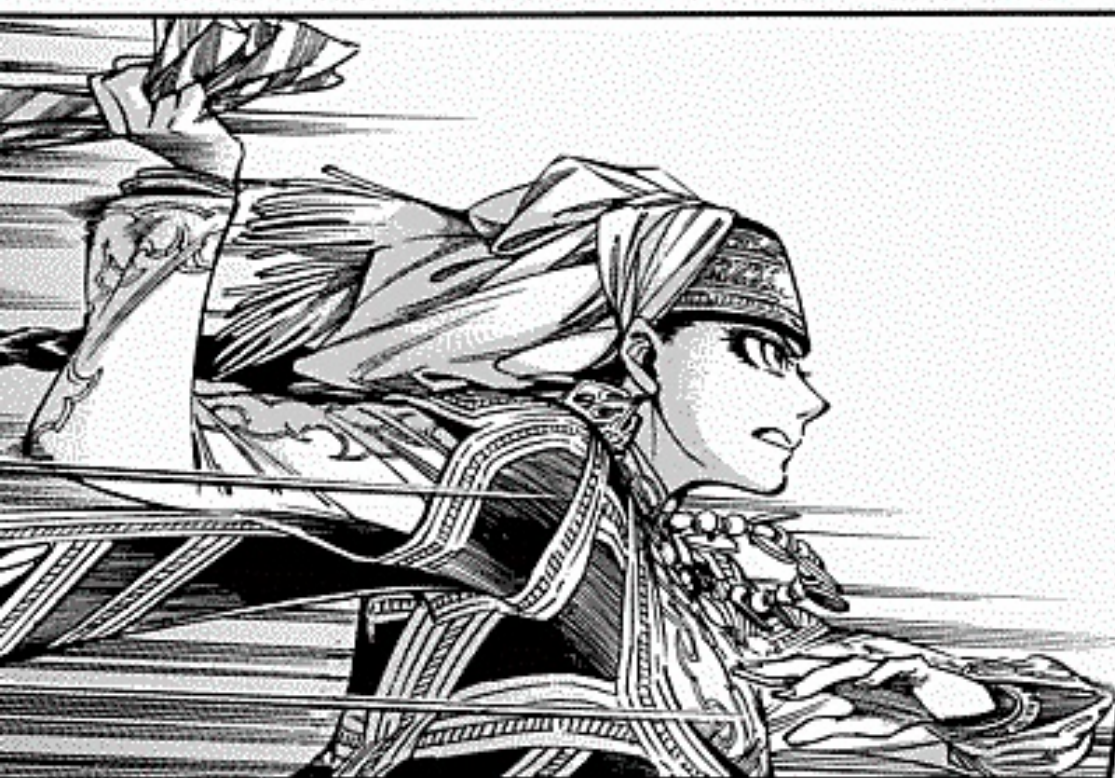
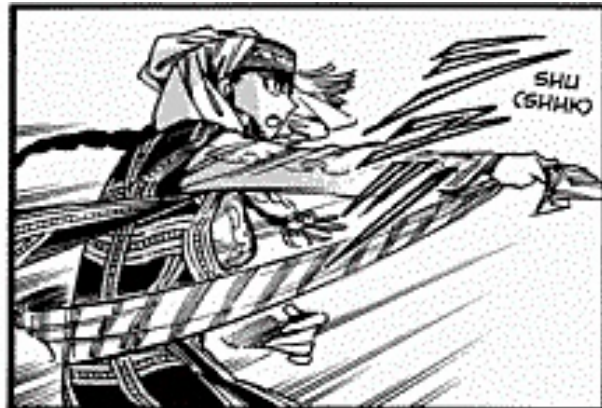


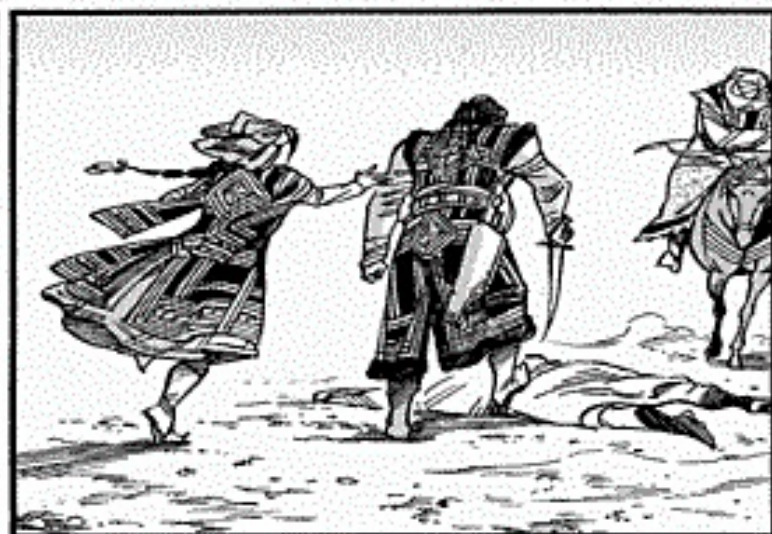
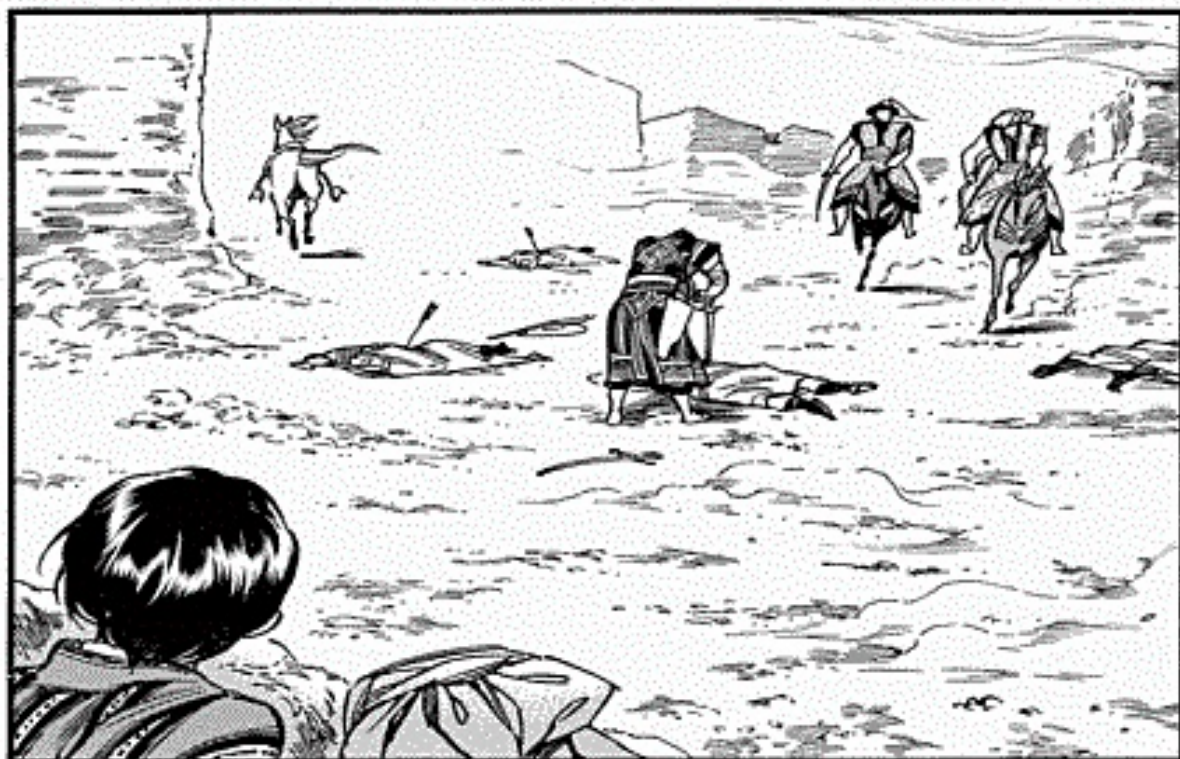


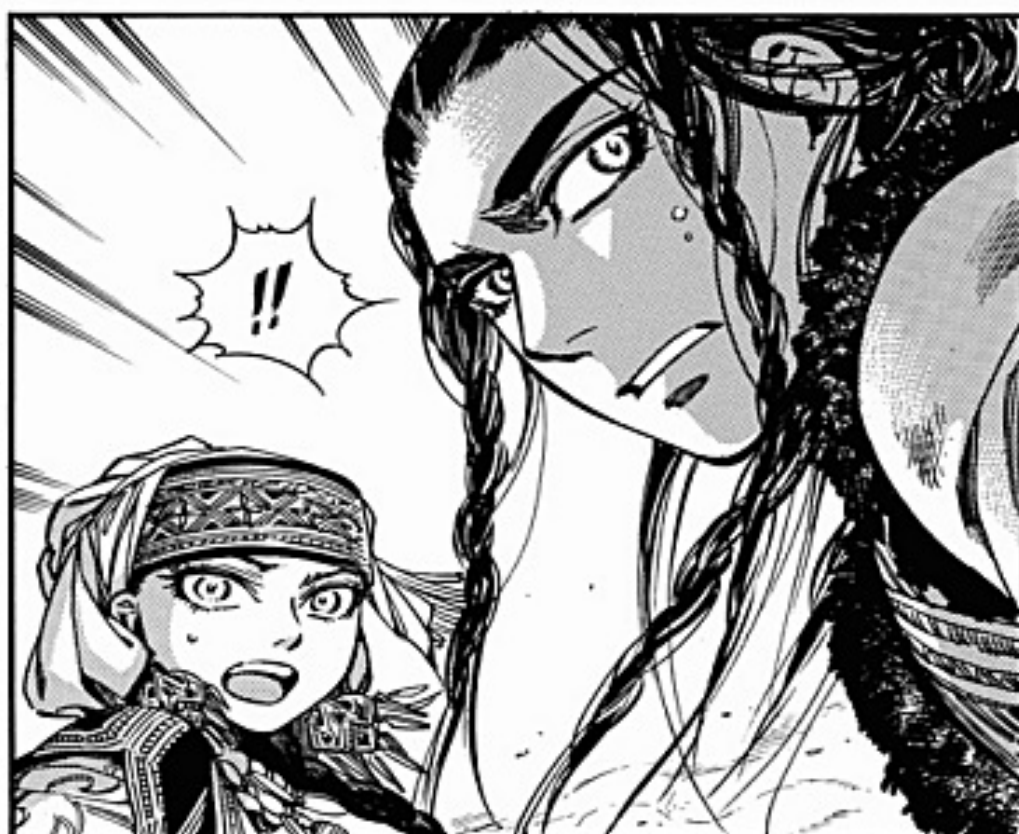


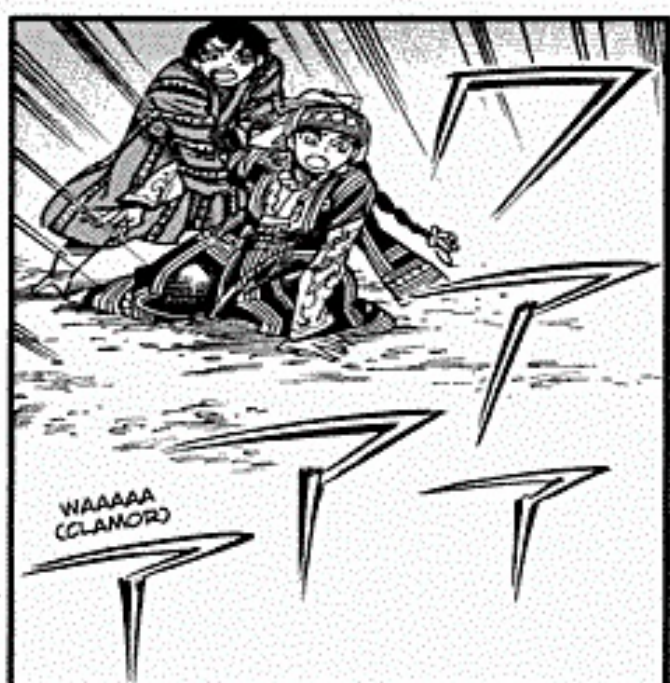
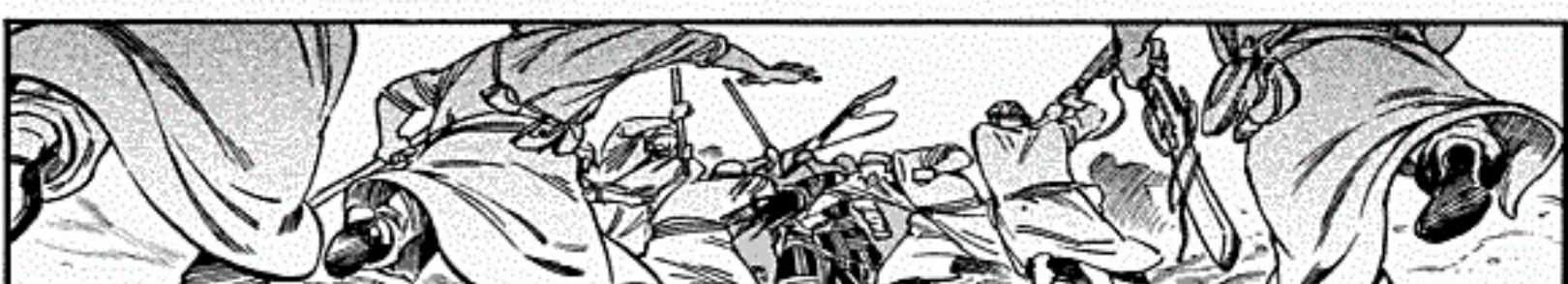
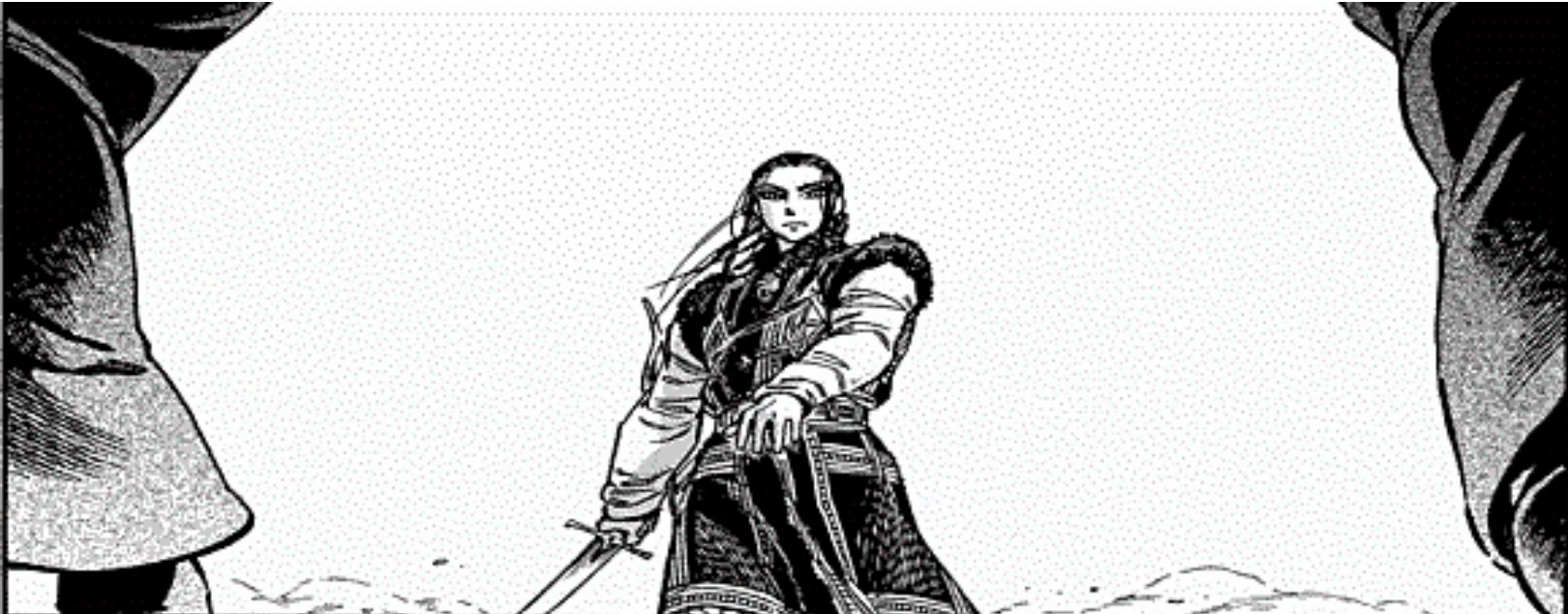














CHAPTER 35
WHAT ONE
DESERVES











SKIP
THE FINE
WORDS.

I DON'T
SEE ANY
ENEMY. WHAT
HAPPENED?

WHEN
WERE YOU
ATTACKED?



YES.

AND MY
SINCEREST
GRATITUDE
FOR SENDING
SUCH A
STRONG FORCE
OF TROOPS
IN OUR
SUPPORT—

I OFFER MY
RESPECT AND
ALLEGIANCE
TO THE
RIGHT AND
NOBLE LORD
OF THESE
LANDS.



THIS IS
THE SECOND
TIME THE
HALGAL HAVE
ATTACKED!

THAT'S
RIGHT!
THEY
DON'T
KNOW
WHEN TO
GIVE UP!



THEY
FIRST CAME
TO SEIZE A
WOMAN OF
THIS TOWN,
BUT WE
SENT THEM
RUNNING.



A SHORT
WHILE
AGO. IT
BEGAN
BEFORE
NOON.

DO YOU
KNOW
WHAT
CLANS
ATTACKED
YOU?

THE
HALGAL
AND
BADAN.

TWO
HORSE-
MAN CLANS
FROM THE
NORTH.





WA
(CLAMOR)

WAIT
JUST
ONE
MINUTE!



NO!

THEY MAY
HAVE BEEN
WITH THE
ENEMY,
BUT THEY
AREN'T THE
ENEMY!



WHAT
DOES
THAT
MEAN...?



ARE YOU
PEOPLE
BLIND!?

AND
DON'T
EVEN
THINK
ABOUT
TOR-
TURING
THEM!

YOU LET
THOSE
MEN
GO THIS
INSTANT!



YES...

WHAT
IS THIS?
EXPLAIN
YOUR-
SELVES
NOW!



WE WERE
HIDING IN
THE UPPER
ROOMS AND
SAW EVERY-
THING!

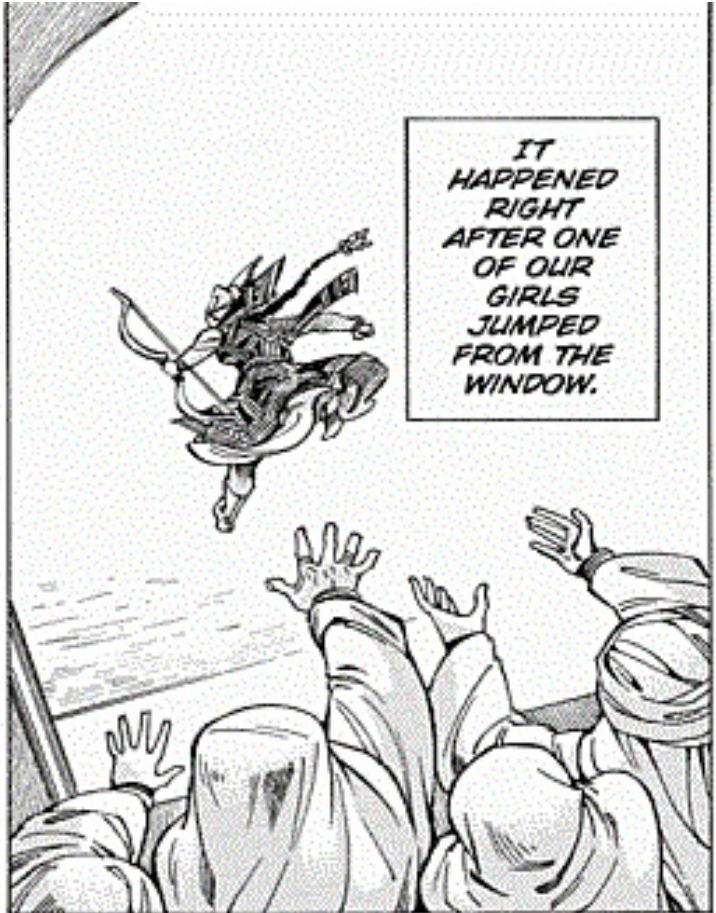
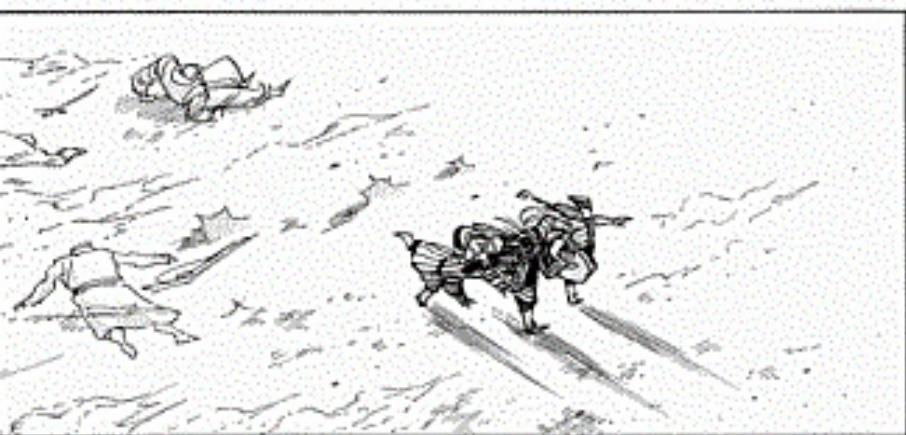


WAA

WAAA

PEOPLE
WHO SAVE
LIVES
DESERVE
TO HAVE
THEIR
LIVES
SAVED!

CAN'T YOU
EVEN TELL
A FRIEND
FROM AN
ENEMY!?



IT
HAPPENED
RIGHT
AFTER ONE
OF OUR
GIRLS
JUMPED
FROM THE
WINDOW.



THEY OWE
HIM THEIR
LIVES! DON'T
YOU DARE
MISTREAT
HIM!

THAT MAN
SAVED
THE LIVES
OF TWO
OF OUR
OWN!



HE'S
THE ONE
WHO
SAVED
US.

...IT'S
TRUE.



YOU
KNOW,
I THINK
HE SAVED
OUR LIVES
TOO.....



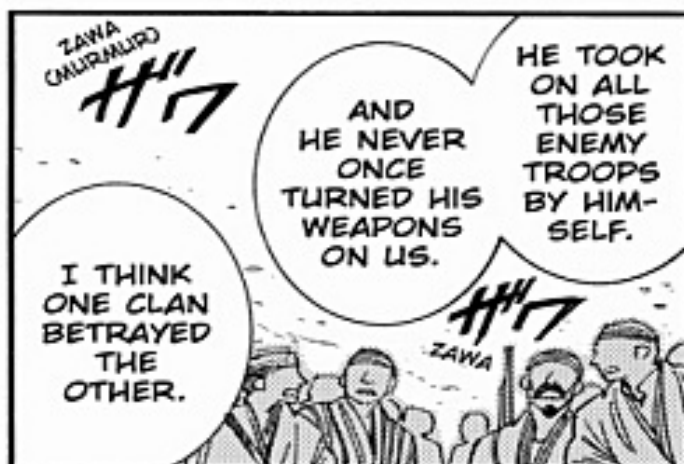
HE
SAVED
US
TOO...

...I
THINK.



JUST
WHO ARE
YOU?

AREN'T
YOU ONE OF
THE ENEMY
CLANSMEN?!



ZAWA
CHURMUD

HH

AND
HE NEVER
ONCE
TURNED HIS
WEAPONS
ON US.

HE TOOK
ON ALL
THOSE
ENEMY
TROOPS
BY HIM-
SELF.

I THINK
ONE CLAN
BETRAYED
THE
OTHER.

HH
ZAWA



QUIET,
NOW!

QUIET!



JORUK!

ONE CLAN
DOESN'T
MEAN ONE
MIND.





WHERE
IS THE
LEADER
OF THE
BADAN?

NO-
WHERE.

HE'S
DEAD.

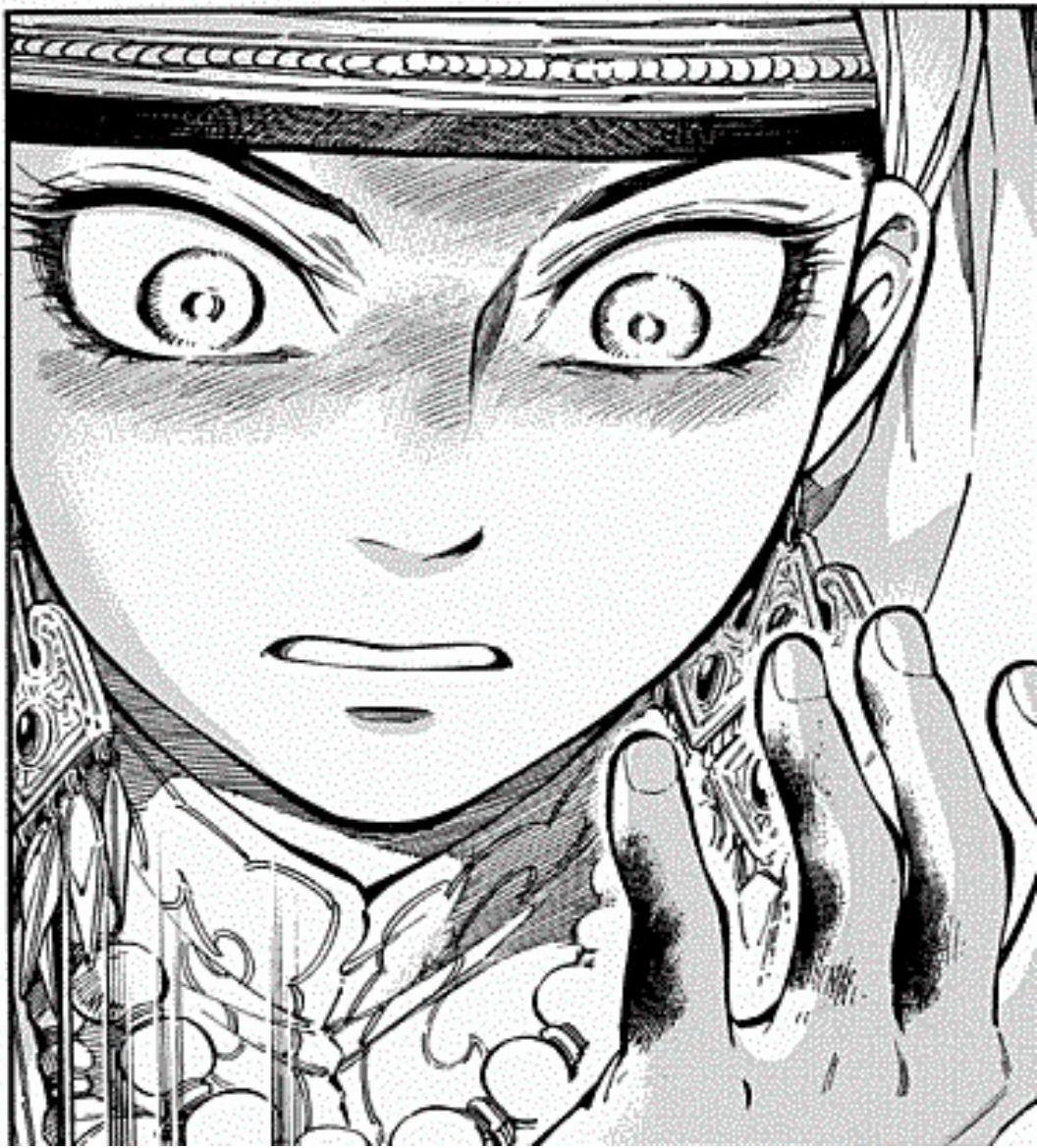
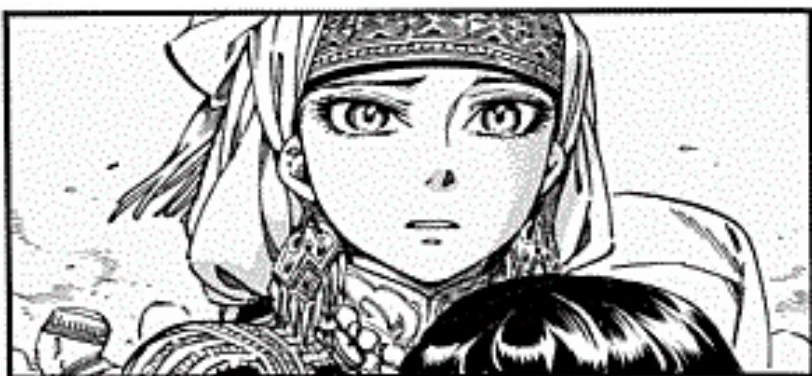


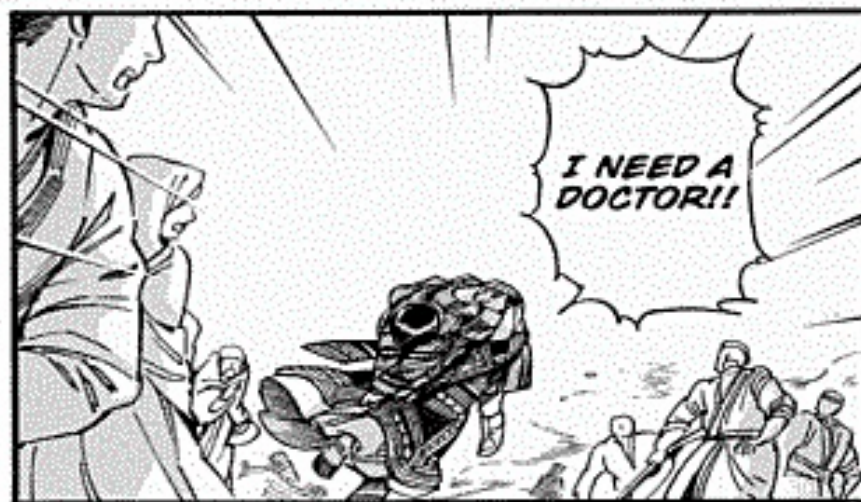
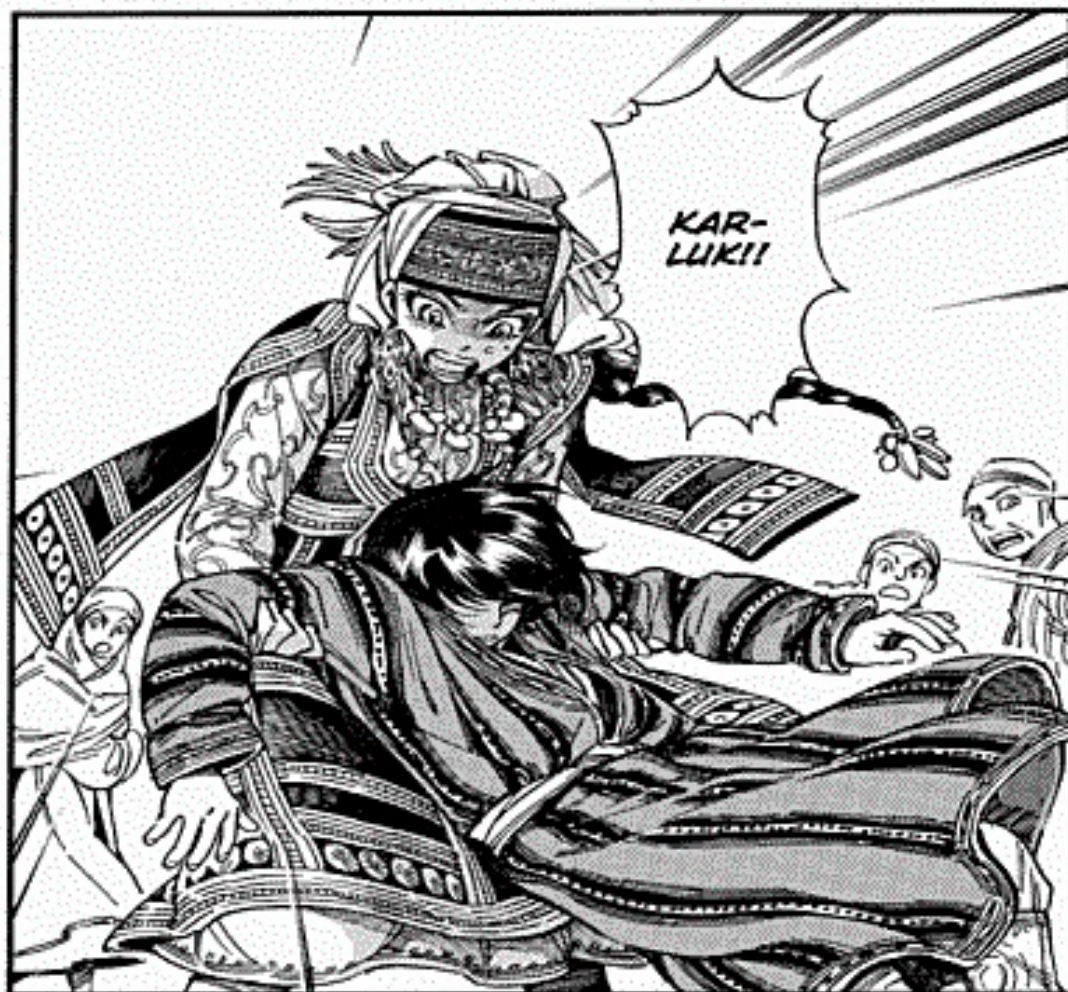


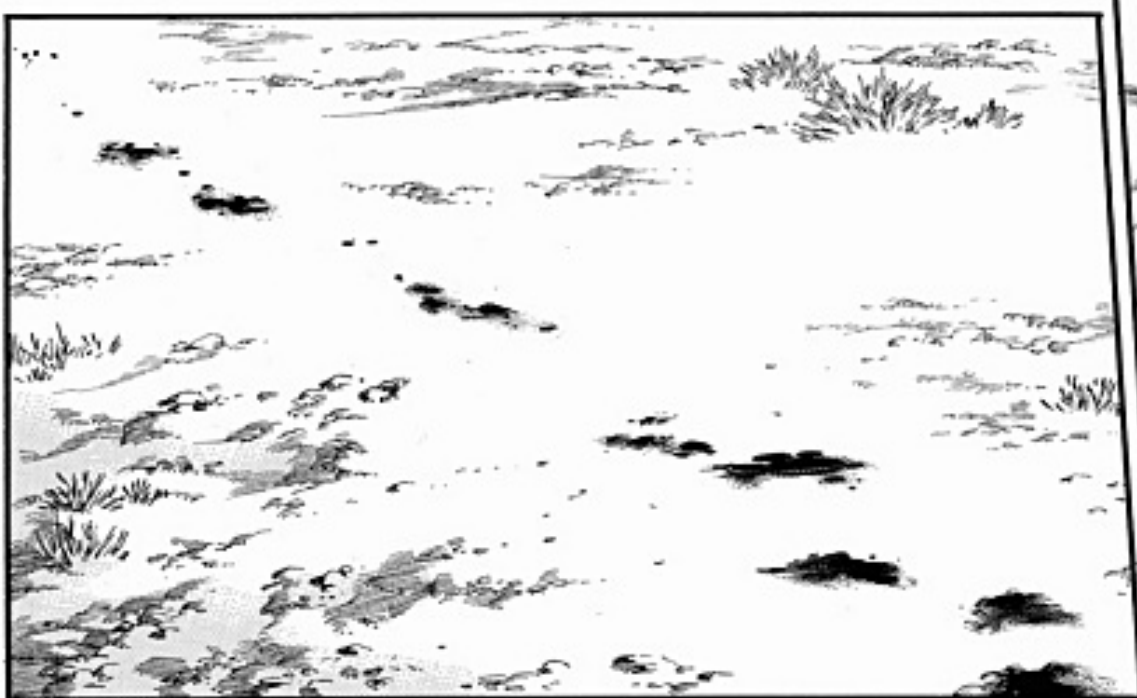
WHEN
YOU GET
ENOUGH
PEOPLE
TOGETHER,
YOU'RE
GONNA HAVE
DIFFER-
ENCES OF
OPINION.

THE SAME
THING
HAPPENS
HERE TOO,
RIGHT?











**THOSE
BAS-
TARDS!**

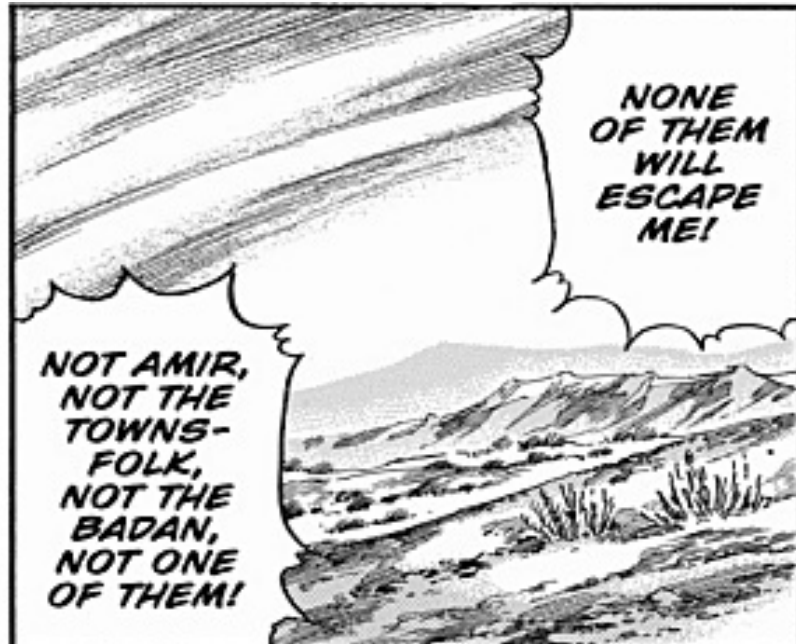
**DON'T
THINK
I'LL
FORGET
THIS!**

**DAMN
THEM!**



**NOT
ONE...**

**NOT
ONE...**



**NONE
OF THEM
WILL
ESCAPE
ME!**

**NOT AMIR,
NOT THE
TOWNS-
FOLK,
NOT THE
BADAN,
NOT ONE
OF THEM!**



**THEY
WILL BE
CURSED
FOREVER!**

**THOSE
WRIG-
GLING,
FILTHY
LICE!**



**MAY THEIR
LANDS SEE
DROUGHT,
THEIR TREES
DRY UP AND
DIE, AND
THEIR LIVE-
STOCK ALL
STARVE!**

**LET THE
DOGS EAT
THEIR
CORPSES!**



RIDER-
LESS
HORSES
...

JUST
WHAT I
NEED.



HEH...



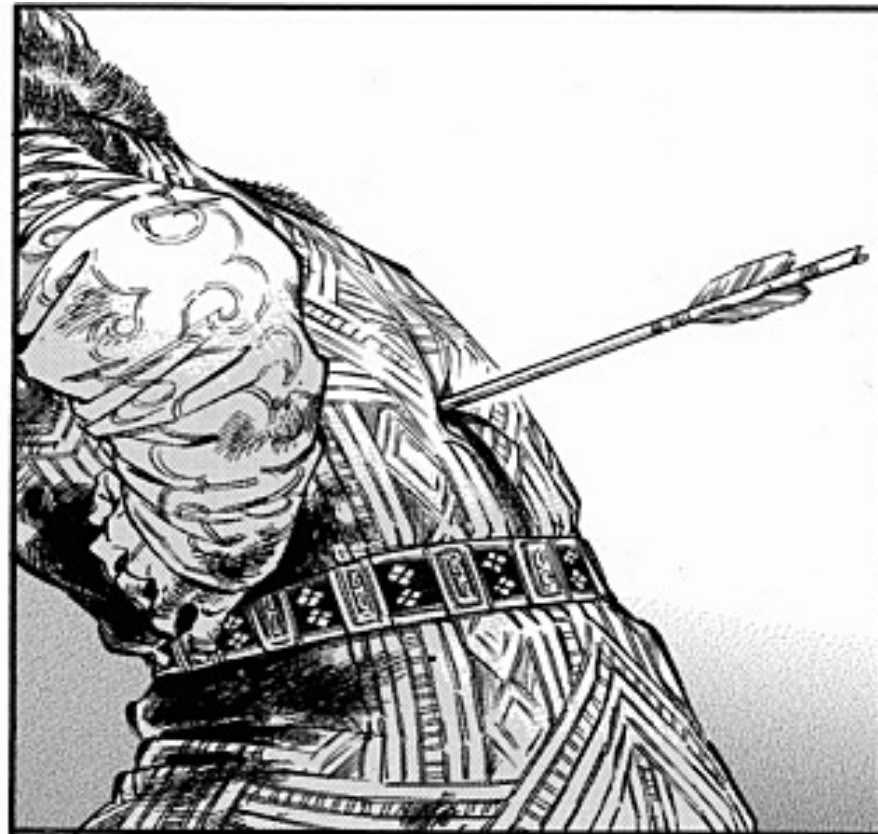
TUOO
(SHOONNO)

I'LL FILL
A CART
WITH
KINDLING,
ROLL
IT INTO
TOWN,
AND—



JUST
YOU WAIT!
I'LL BURN
YOUR
WHOLE
DAMN
VILLAGE
TO THE
GROUND!

ONCE
I'M BACK
AT CAMP,
I CAN
MANAGE
SOME-
HOW!





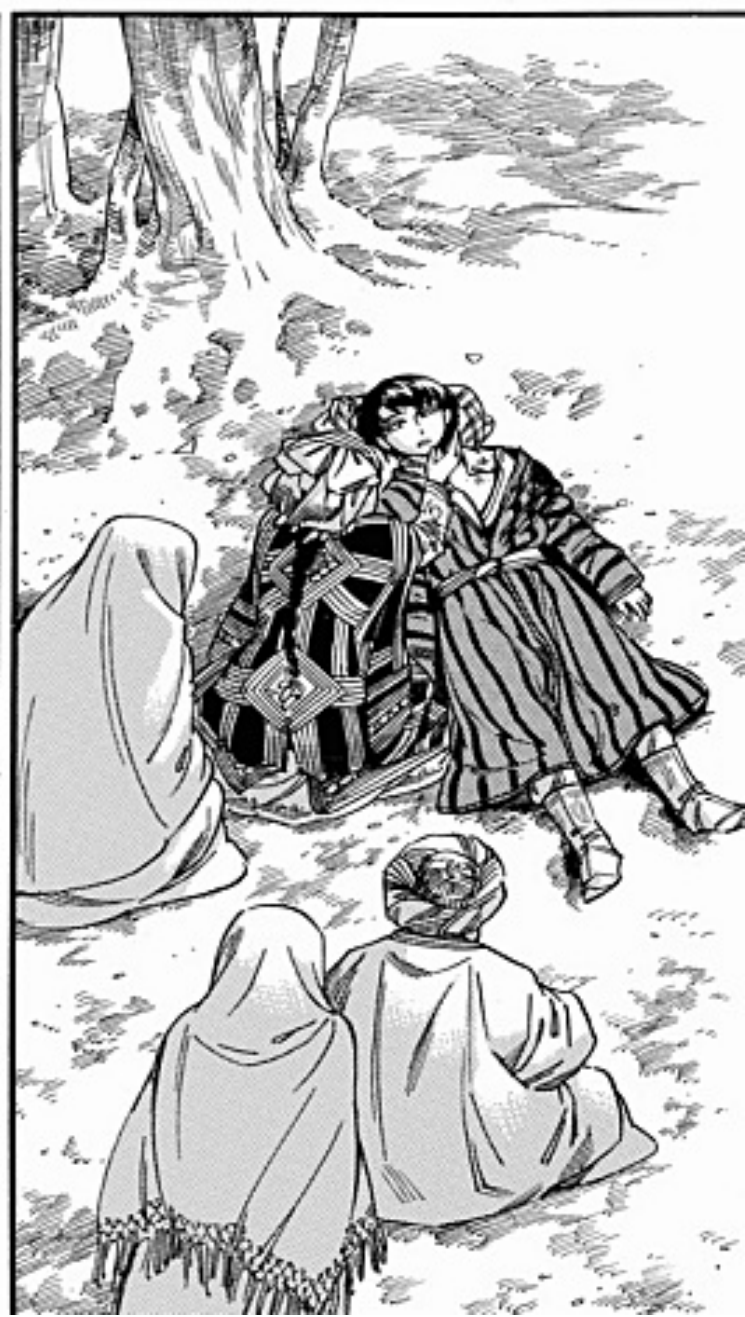
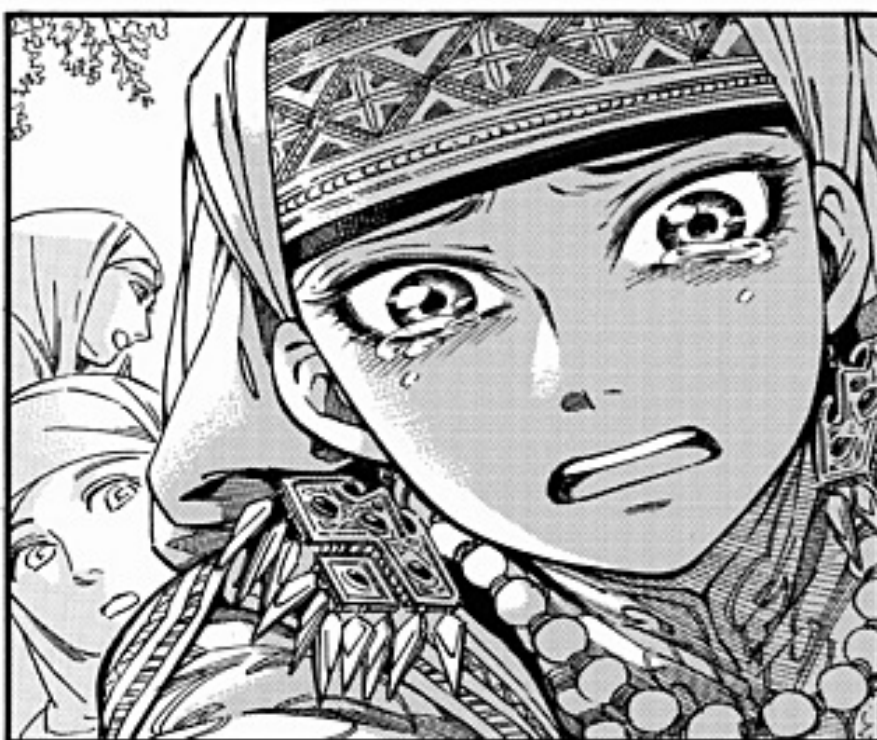
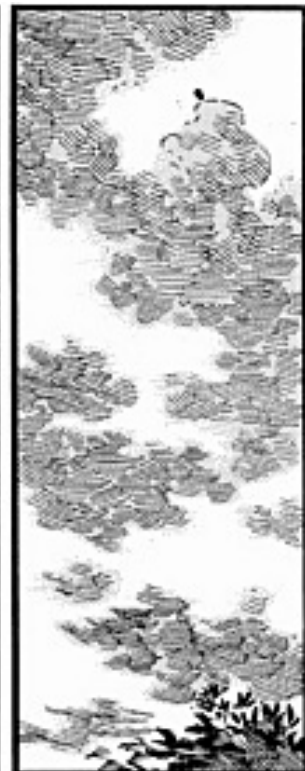
WHAT A
FOOL.

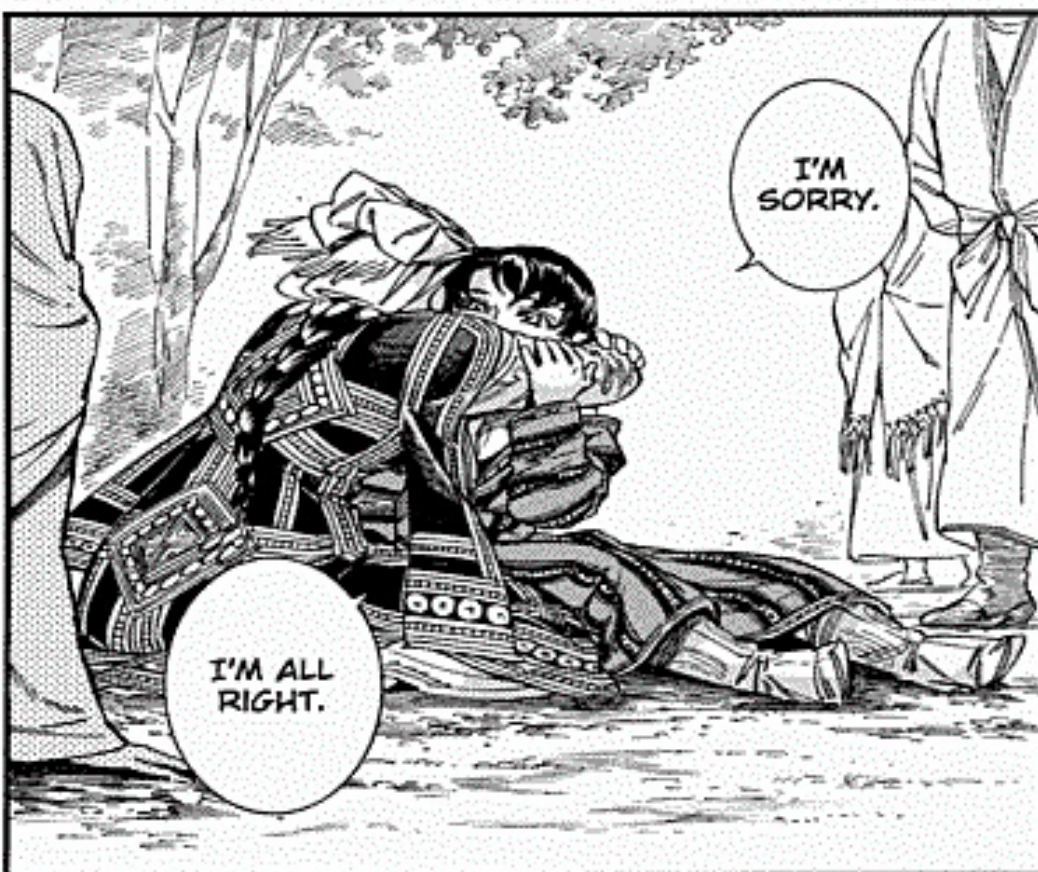
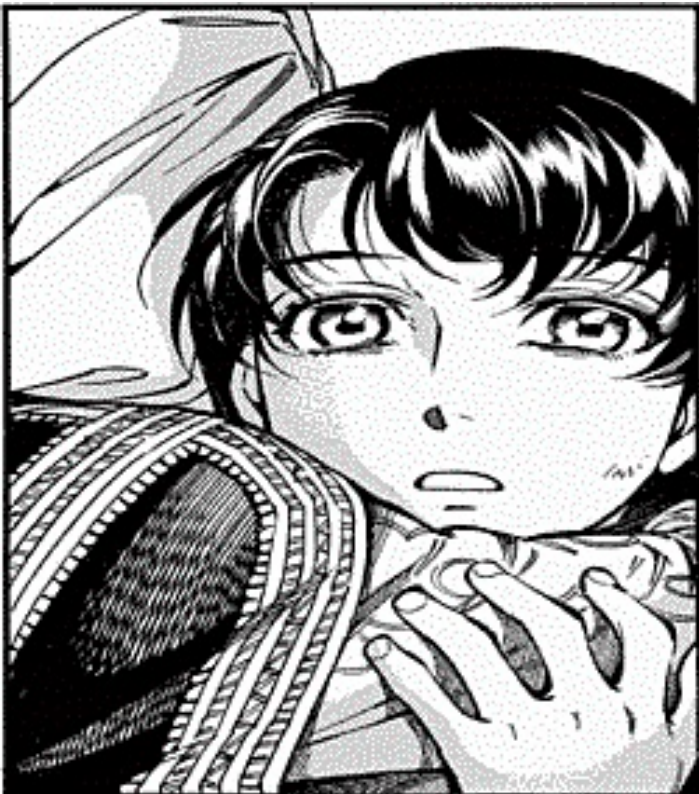
.....FOR
PITY'S
SAKE.

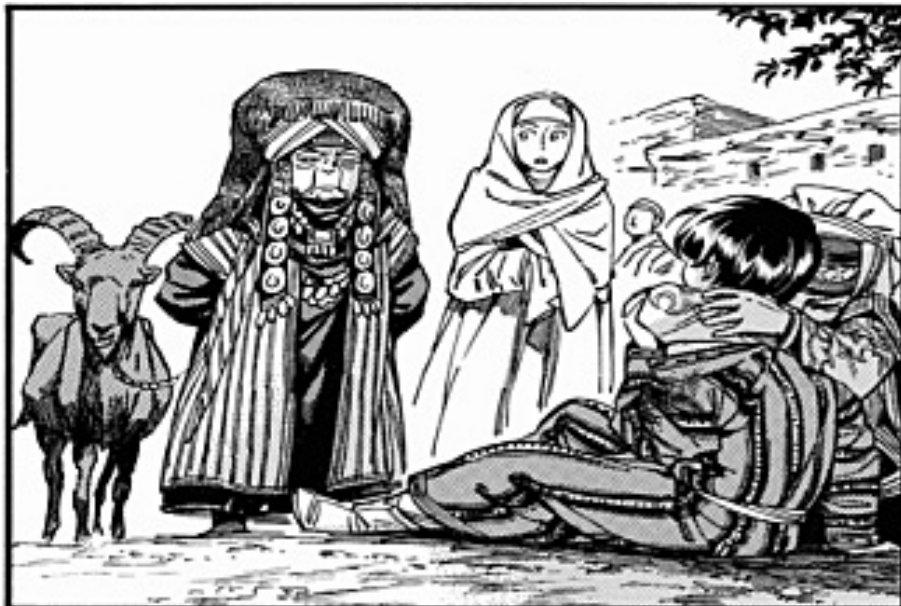


...WHEN
A MAN
GETS JUST
WHAT
HE DE-
SERVES.

I SUPPOSE
THERE ARE
TIMES...







THE
BLEEDING
HAS
STOPPED.

AND
YOU
YOUNG
PEOPLE
HEAL
FAST.



ARE YOU
WELL?



I AM.

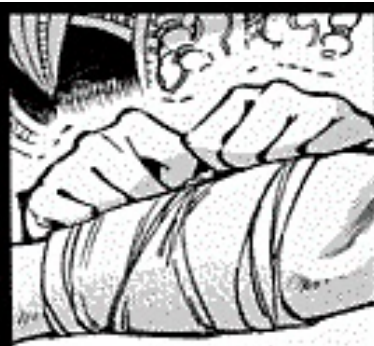


YOUR
FATHER IS
DEAD.



NOW,
THEN.
AMIR.



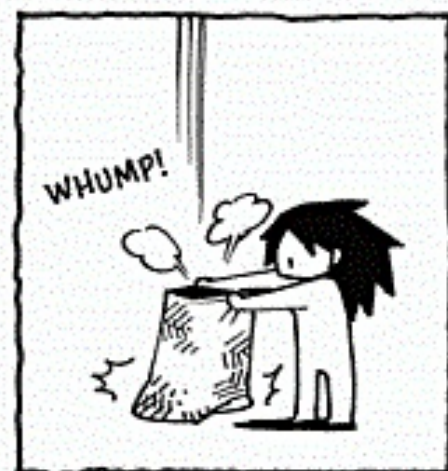
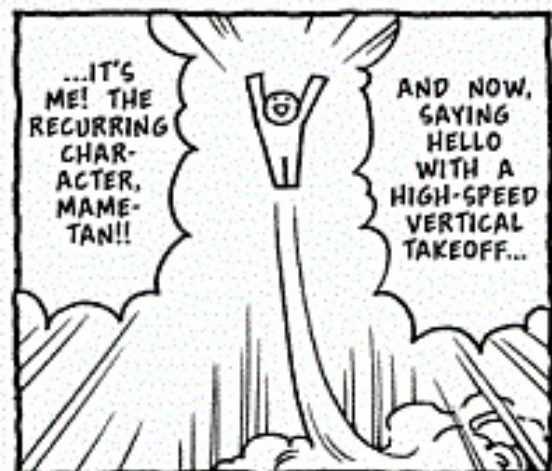
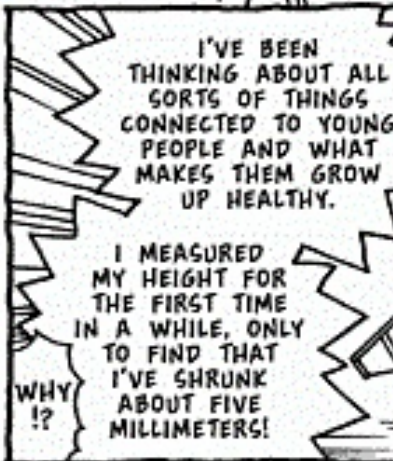


AFTERWORD

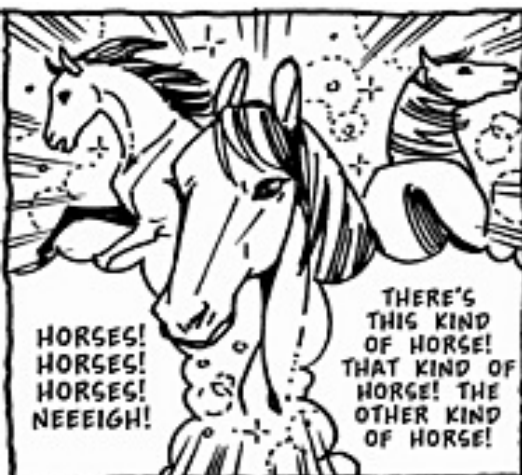




"THE MARK ON THE DOOR FRAME IS FROM TWO YEARS BACK"



NOTE: "THE MARK ON THE DOOR FRAME IS FROM TWO YEARS BACK" IS THE FIRST LINE OF A CHILDREN'S SONG CALLED "SEIKURABE." THE SONG IS WRITTEN FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A YOUNG BOY WHOSE ELDEST BROTHER, SEVENTEEN YEARS HIS SENIOR, MEASURED HIS LITTLE BROTHER'S HEIGHT ON THE DOOR FRAME ON CHILDREN'S DAY TWO YEARS BEFORE, THEN THE OLDER BROTHER WENT OFF TO TOKYO, AND HE HASN'T BEEN BACK SINCE. IN THE SONG, THE YOUNGER BROTHER TALKS ABOUT HOW HE'S GROWN AND HOW MUCH HE MISSES HIS BROTHER.



HORSES!
HORSES!
HORSES!
NEEEIGH!

THERE'S
THIS KIND
OF HORSE!
THAT KIND OF
HORSE! THE
OTHER KIND
OF HORSE!



...BUT
IT'S JUST
HORSES!
LOTS AND
LOTS OF
HORSES!!

IT'S THE
CONTINU-
ATION OF
AMIR'S
FAMILY
STORY
FROM
VOLUME
2...



PRETTY
DARN
BLOOD-
THIRSTY!

A BRIDE'S
STORY IS
ALREADY
AT SIX
VOLUMES!!

THIS
TIME THERE
IS BATTLE!
A SHOOTOUT!
CAVALRY
CHARGE!



2014

WHAT
EXCELLENT
TIMING,
RIGHT?

ON A
DIFFERENT
SUBJECT,
THIS YEAR IS
CALLED THE
YEAR OF THE
HORSE.

WHAT
TIMING?
YOU DRAW
HORSES EVERY
YEAR, ALL
YEAR LONG!



I THINK IT GOES
WITHOUT SAYING,
BUT CAVALRY +
ARCHERY IS
SO COOL THAT
I DROOL!



HUFF!

HUFF!

HUFF!



EEHEE-
HEEN!
(DEAD-
LINE
ANXIETY)

EEHEEN-
HEEN!
BRUHUUH!
(HORSE
SOUNDS)



I WAS IN A
SUPER-
MARKET
IN THE
CITY OF
NAKATSU...

LOVES GOING
TO LOCAL
SUPERMAR-
KETS.



DON'T YOU
HAVE ANY
STORIES
ABOUT THEM?

THIS
HAPPENED
WHEN I
WENT
TO OITA
PREFEC-
TURE IN
KYUSHU.



22
47

I'VE BEEN
OUT MORE
THAN I
EXPECTED!

HALF
OF
THEM!

AS OF NOW,
I'VE BEEN TO
ABOUT HALF
OF THEM!

BY THE WAY,
REMEMBER
IN VOLUME 4
WHEN I TALKED
ABOUT GOING
TO ALL THE
PREFECTURES
OF JAPAN
DURING MY
THIRTIES?



TALKING
ABOUT HER
FAMILY.
(HER SON,
MAYBE?)

HER
ACCENT IS
SO THICK,
I HAVE NO
IDEA WHAT
SHE'S
SAYING...



...WHOA.



I HAD THOUGHT THAT DIALECTS WERE SLOWLY VANISHING, BUT THEY'RE STILL PRETTY STRONG. HUH?

IZZAT SO?

THE FAMOUS TRANSLATOR, DONALD KEENE, MENTIONED THAT WHEN HE SITS NEXT TO SOMEONE TALKATIVE ON A PLANE, HIS GO-TO TOPIC IS DIALECTS (IN THEIR MOTHER TONGUE).

I THINK THIS OLD LADY'S ACCENT WAS PARTICULARLY THICK.

...BUT REALITY WASN'T WHAT I EXPECTED, AND IT WAS A BIG SHOCK.

SURE, THERE ARE DIFFERENT WORDS AND TURNS OF PHRASE, BUT I'M SURE I WOULD UNDERSTAND...IS WHAT I THOUGHT

SURE, EVEN WITH A THICK ACCENT, IT'S STILL JAPANESE.



(TURKEY)
TURKIC LANGUAGE GROUP

DURING THE SOVIET TIMES, THE LINGUA FRANCA WAS MAINLY RUSSIAN.

UZBEK

KARAKALPAK

KAZAK

KYRGYZ

TURKMEN

UYGHUR

BY THE WAY, MOST OF CENTRAL ASIA SPEAKS TURKIC LANGUAGES, BUT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT DIALECTS.

(IRAN)
PERSIAN LANGUAGE GROUP

TAJIK

THEY CAN COMMUNICATE, BUT IT'S A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE GROUP.

YOU REALLY... DON'T HAVE TO.

ALSO, SINCE PARIYA DIDN'T SHOW UP MUCH IN THIS VOLUME, I'M GOING TO DRAW HER HERE.

ARE THEY STILL ALIVE OR NOT? (IS THAT A JINX?)

I THINK WE'LL CATCH UP WITH SMITH AND ALI AND SEE HOW THEY'RE DOING.

OKAY, FOR NEXT TIME WE'RE GOING TO SWITCH GEARS.

IT'S A GO-TO TOPIC!

TALKING ABOUT DIALECTS DRAWS YOU IN!

SO LET'S MEET AGAIN IN THE NEXT VOLUME!

WE'LL SAY GOOD-BYE IN DELTA FORMATION!

END.

WHAT AM I EVEN HERE FOR!?
HEY!

A BRIDE'S STORY ⑥

KAORU MORI



TRANSLATION: WILLIAM FLANAGAN

LETTERING: ABIGAIL BLACKMAN

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